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Challoner, Richard

THE WONDERS OF GOD IN THE WILDERNESS;

OR

THE LIVES

OF THE

MOST CELEBRATED

SAINTS

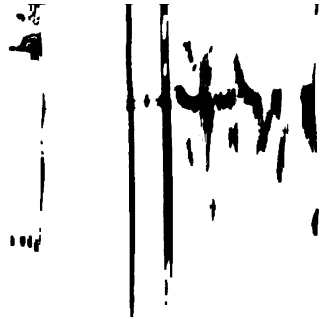
OF THE

ORIENTAL DESARTS;

Faithfully collected out of the genuine works of the holy fathers, and other ancient eccleſiaſtical writers.

LONDON,

Printed for W. NEEDHAM, Bookſeller, over-againſt Gray's-Inn-Gate Holbourn, 1755.



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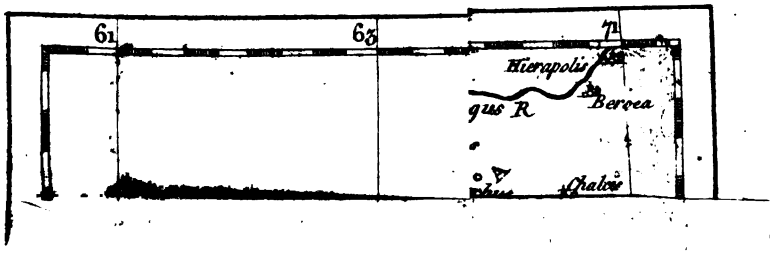
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THE WONDERS OF GOD IN THE WILDERNESS:

OR,

THE *LIVES* OF THE *ANCIENT SAINTS* OF THE ORIENTAL DESARTS.

ST. PAUL, the first Hermite.

Abridged from his Life written by St. Jerome.

THIS Saint was born in the lower Thebais, a province of Egypt, in the third century, of Christian parents, who being wealthy in worldly riches, took care to give him a liberal education, and to train him up both in the Greek and Egyptian literature; yet without any prejudice to his innocence, or Christian piety; for which he was remarkable from his childhood; being always of a meek and humble disposition, and

greatly fearing and loving his God. His parents dying when he was about fifteen years of age, left him their eſtate; which he had not long enjoyed, when that bloody perſecution, ſet on foot by the Emperor Decius, (who employed all manner of torments to oblige the Chriſtians to renounce Jeſus Chriſt and to offer ſacrifice to idols) reached Egypt, alſo and Thebais; where it made many martyrs; and drove away many others into the deſarts and mountains; where great numbers of them periſhed with hunger, or ſickneſs, or fell a prey to robbers, or wild beaſts; as we learn from St. Denys, who was at that very time biſhop of Alexandria, in his epiſtle to Fabius biſhop of Antioch. Upon this occaſion Paul alſo withdrew himſelf to a remote country-houſe, deſigning to lye concealed there, till the ſtorm blew over: but his ſiſters huſband, who was acquainted with the place of his retreat, conceived a reſolution to betray him to the perſecuters, in hopes of poſſeſſing himſelf of his eſtate. The Saint being informed of this his wicked reſolution, left this country-houſe, and fled into the wilderneſs, where he propoſed to paſs his time, till the danger was over. Here as he advanced ſtill further and further into the remoter parts of the deſart, he came at laſt to a rocky mountain, at the foot of which he found a large den or cave: and going in he diſcovered there a kind of a ſpacious porch, open at the top to the heaven, but protected by an old palm-tree, which covered it with its ſpreading branches: near which there was a ſpring of clear water: and in the hollow parts of the mountain, ſeveral cells or rooms, which by the inſtruments he found there, appeared to have been formerly occupied by coiners. This place the Saint judged to be very proper for his abode; and embraced it as a dwelling aſſigned him by divine providence for the remainder of his life. And thus he who thought only at firſt to hide himſelf

himself for a while in the wilderness from the fury of the persecuters; was by the designs of God conducted thither, to be an inhabitant for life, and the first that should dedicate, as it were, and consecrate those deserts to divine love; and lived there for so many years a perfect model of an entire separation and disengagement from all ties and affections of this world; for the instruction and encouragement of many thousands, who should by his example in following ages embrace a recluse or eremitical life. Thus the malice of his brother-in-law, by driving him away from his worldly possessions, was the occasion of his embracing a life, in which, and by which, his soul was daily more and more enriched with the treasures of divine grace, and put in the most effectual way to secure to herself immense and everlasting treasures in the eternal possession of her God. Upon which occasion we may admire and adore the wonderful ways of the divine goodness, which usually draws the greatest good, even the sanctification and salvation of our souls, from what we poor mortals apprehend as great evils; more especially from the crosses and sufferings of this life, and the loss of those things, which we are apt to affect too much, to the prejudice of that love which we owe to God.

But who shall be able to relate the wonderful life which our Saint here led, estranged from all conversation of mortals; and perpetually attending to his God, by prayer, and contemplation, night and day; or the continual progress he made every day in the love of God, the true science of the Saints, and that better part, which they choose with Mary, and which shall never be taken from them? It may suffice to say that the perfection, which he attained to in divine love, which is the true measure of all sanctity, was so great and supereminent in the sight of God, as to exceed by far that of St. Antony, the

wonder of all ages for chriſtian and religious perfection: and this by the teſtimony of God himſelf. And yet we are not to ſuppoſe that with all his ſanctity he could be exempted in his ſolitude, no more than St. Antony was, from the temptations and moleſtations of the common enemy, who, by the permiſſion of God, is moſt troubleſome to thoſe who oppoſe him moſt; though it all turns in the end to their greater good, and his own confuſion. As to the food and raiment of St. Paul, we learn from my author, who had his account from the diſciples of St. Antony, and they from their maſter, that he lived (at leaſt for a good part of the time, till God was pleaſed to provide for him in a miraculous manner) on the dates which the palm-tree produced; and drank of the water of the ſpring: and as for his cloathing, he made himſelf a garment of the leaves of the ſame tree, woven together after the manner of a mat or a baſket. And leaſt this auſterity of his life might ſeem to any one incredible, or a thing impoſſible, St. Jerome in his relation calls our Lord Jeſus and his angels to witneſs, that he himſelf ſaw certain ſolitaries, in that part of the deſart of Syria, which borders upon the Saracens; of whom one had lived, ſhut up for thirty years upon barley bread alone and muddy water; and another had choſen for his manſion an old pit or ciſtern, where he had no other food but five dry figs every day.

Our Saint had now lived in his ſolitude to the age of one hundred and thirteen years; when St. Antony who was now about ninety years old, was one day thinking with himſelf that no one amongſt the religious of Egypt had penetrated farther into thoſe wilderneſſes than he had done. Whereupon he was admoniſhed in the night, in a dream, that there was one farther in the deſart much better than he: and that he ſhould make haſte to viſit him. In compliance

compliance with this divine admonition, Antony ſet out at break of day in queſt of this ſervant of God, with great confidence that he who had ſent him forth, would conduct him to the place where he ſhould find him. Thus he ſpent two whole days, fatigued with the labour of the journey, and broiled with the heat of the ſun, which is violent in thoſe ſandy deſarts: meeting with no mortal all the way, but only two monſtrous ſhapes; the one repreſenting a *centaur*, half a man and half a horſe, and the other a *ſatyr*, made up of a man and a goat: which whether they were phantoms and illuſions of the enemy, or monſters bred in thoſe vaſt wilderneſſes is uncertain. The Saint oppoſed to theſe frightful figures, his uſual arms of the ſhield of faith and the ſign of the croſs; and neither of them offered him any harm: but on the contrary the former, being aſked where the ſervant of God dwelt, pointed towards the place, and then run ſwiftly away and diſappeared; and the latter brought him ſome dates for his food; and being aſked, who or what he was? delivered an intelligible anſwer (by ſome ſupernatural power) with an acknowledgment of God, and of Jeſus Chriſt his Son: which gave the Saint occaſion to glorify our Lord, and to reproach the unbelieving city of Alexandria, which refuſed to acknowledge the true and living God, which even beaſts adored, and worſhipped theſe very beaſts inſtead of him. At which words of the Saint the monſter fled away with incredible ſpeed, and was ſeen no more.

Antony ſpent the two nights watching in prayer, and on the third morning, at break of day, he perceived at a diſtance a wolf panting for thirſt, going into a cavern at the foot of a mountain. Wherefore coming up to the place after the beaſt was gone, he ventured into the cave, advancing cautiouſly and ſilently in the dark, till at length he perceived at

ſome diſtance a glimmering of light, (from the opening from above over the porch of the cell of the ſaint) upon which haſtening forward he ſtumbled upon a ſtone; and by the noiſe gave occaſion to St. Paul to ſhut his door, and to faſten it within. Antony was now convinced that here was the perſon whom he ſought: and coming up to the door, earneſtly begged for admittance, with many tears, lying proſtrate on the ground from morning till noon (to teach us the neceſſity of fervor, and perſeverance in prayer, if we would obtain what we aſk:) till the holy old man at length opened the door to him. Then falling upon each others neck, and embracing each other, and calling one another by their proper names, as if they had been of long acquaintance; they joined in giving thanks to God: and when they had ſet down together, Paul ſaid to Antony, ſee here the man, whom thou haſt taken ſo much pains to ſeek, and who very ſpeedily muſt turn to duſt: tell me then if thou pleaſeſt, how mankind goes on; what is the preſent ſtate of the empire; and if their be any ſtill remaining that worſhip devils, &c? Whilſt they were diſcourſing on theſe matters, they perceived a raven, alighting upon one of the branches of the palm-tree; which gently flying down, droped a loaf of bread before them; and ſo flew away. See ſaid Paul, our Lord hath ſent us a dinner: O how loving and merciful he is! There are now ſixty years, that I have daily received from him half a loaf, but upon thy coming, Chriſt hath been pleaſed to ſend to his ſoldiers a double proviſion. Then after prayer and thanks-giving, they ſat down by the ſpring, to take their meal which God had ſent them: not without an humble contention, who ſhould break the loaf; which they decided at laſt by breaking it conjointly: and ſo taking a moderate refreſhment, they laid themſelves down to ſip at the fountain: and then returned to prayer and to the praiſes of God,

God, in which they ſpent the evening, and all the following night.

The next morning Paul thus accoſted Antony. 'Tis a long time, brother, that I have known of your dwelling in theſe regions: and the Lord long ago promiſed me your company. But as my time is now come to go to reſt, (as I have always *deſired to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt*) and my race being finiſhed, the crown of juſtice waits for me, thou art now ſent by the Lord to cover this body with ground, or rather to commit earth to earth.' Which when Antony heard, breaking out into ſighs and tears, he begun to entreat him, not to leave him, but to take him along with him for his companion in ſo happy a journey. 'Thou oughtſt not, ſaid Paul, to ſeek in this thy own intereſt, but what may be for the good of others. It would be expedient indeed to thee to lay down this load of fleſh, and to follow the Lamb: but it is expedient to the reſt of the brethren, that thou ſhouldſt continue here, to inſtruct them by thy example. Wherefore go, I beſeech thee, if it be not too much trouble, and bring hither the cloak, which was given thee by biſhop Athanaſius, to wrap up my body for its burial:' which, ſays St. Jerome, he aſked, not that he much cared whether his body was committed to the earth covered or naked; he who for ſo many years had uſed no other clothing, but the leaves of the palm-tree; but that Antony being abſent when he died might be leſs afflicted with his death. To which our church-hiſtorians add another reaſon, *viz.* that by his deſiring to be buried in the cloak of Athanaſius (at that time violently perſecuted by the Arians, for the Catholick faith of the Trinity) he might bear teſtimony to the cauſe of God and his truth, and declare to the world his communicating with this great prelate, who was then, and all his life-time, one of the principal champ-

pions of God and his church againſt the Arian hereſy.

Antony being aſtoniſhed to hear him ſpeak of Athanaſius, and of the cloak, (of which he could no otherwiſe have been informed but by revelation) as it he ſaw Chriſt himſelf in Paul, without making any further reply, kiſſed his hands with tears, and parting with him made the beſt of his way home to his own monaſtery. Here his two diſciples (Amathas and Macarius) aſked him where he had been ſo long. To whom he made no other anſwer, but, 'wo to me a ſinner, who deſerve not to bear the 'name of a religious man! I have ſeen Elias: I 'have ſeen John in the wilderneſs: I have ſeen 'with truth Paul in paradiſe.' And ſo without explaining himſelf any further, he went into his cell, ſtriking his breaſt, and taking up the cloak, made haſt away; without ſtaying to take any refreſhment: having Paul continually in his mind, and fearing that which indeed happened, leſt Paul ſhould die before he could reach his cave. On the ſecond morning, when he had travelled for about three hours, he ſaw the ſoul of Paul in great glory aſcending to heaven, attended with an innumerable multitude of angels and ſaints. At this ſight falling down on the ground, he cried out lamenting and mourning: 'O 'Paul why doſt thou leave me? why doſt thou go 'without letting me ſalute thee? ſo lately have I 'come to know thee: and doſt thou depart from me 'ſo ſoon?' Then riſing up he went the remaining part of the way, notwithſtanding his great age, and his having been before greatly fatigued, with ſuch unaccuſtomed ſpeed, that as he himſelf afterwards relates, he ſeemed rather to fly than to walk.

When he came into the cave, and entered in, he found the body of the Saint in the poſture of one at prayer, kneeling with hands lifted up: ſo that thinking he might be alive, he knelt down to pray with him.

him: But not perceiving him to ſigh, as he was accuſtomed in his prayers, he was convinced he was dead. Wherefore weeping and embracing the dead body, he wrapt it up in the cloak, and carried it out; ſinging hymns and pſalms according to the chriſtian tradition. But here no ſmall difficulty occured, how he ſhould bury the body, having no ſpade or other inſtrument to make a grave: ſo that what to do he knew not: to go back to his monaſtery was three days journey: to ſtay where he was, was doing nothing. Whilſt he was in this perplexity, behold two lions, from the remoter part of the wilderneſs, came running with all ſpeed towards him. At the ſight of them, Antony was at firſt ſurprized; but preſently recollecting himſelf in God, he ſhook off all fear, and ſtood his ground; till the beaſts coming up to the place, went and laid themſelves down at the feet of the deceaſed Saint, and ſeemed in their way to lament his death. Then going to a little diſtance off, they began to ſcratch up the ſandy ground with their claws; and did not ceaſe till they had made a hole big enough to anſwer the purpoſe of a grave. Which when they had done coming to Antony as it were for their wages, wagging their ears and hanging down their heads, they licked his hands and his feet. The Saint conceiving that in their mute way they craved his bleſſing, took occaſion to praiſe and glorify God, whom all his creatures ſerve; and then prayed in this manner: 'O Lord, without whoſe 'diſpoſition not a leaf falls from the tree, nor a 'ſparrow falls to the ground, give to them as thou 'knoweſt beſt:' and ſo making them a ſign with his hand he ſent them away. Then taking the dead body of St. Paul, he laid it down in the grave which they had made, and covered it with the earth. And ſo returned home, carrying with him the garment made of the leaves of the palm-tree, which Paul had worn (which for the remaining years of his life he always

always put on, upon the ſolemn feſtivals of Eaſter, and Pentecoſt) and related all that he had ſeen and done to his diſciples, from whom St. Jerome had his account.

And here it may not be improper, to reflect, with this holy Doctor of the church, in the concluſion of his life of this Saint, on the difference between the cloathing, eating, drinking, lodging, and in a word, the whole manner of living of this ſervant of God, and that of worldlings, who never think they have enough, and are always ſlaves to their own corrupt inclinations. Paul coveted nothing, and wanted nothing: and therefore was always eaſy and content: they are always coveting and wanting, and never perfectly eaſy. Paul with his mean fare enjoyed long life and health, together with a good conſcience and interior peace: their intemperances and luſts, their paſſions, their pride, their ambition, their avarice, their envy, their cares and fears, and the contradictions of their will and humour, to which they are perpetually expoſed, rob them of their health, ſhorten their days, and baniſh both grace and peace far from their ſouls. In fine, Paul with all his poverty and mortifications, was happy even here in the experience of the love of his God; in the ſenſe of his divine preſence, in the contemplation of his heavenly truths, in the ſweets he found in mental prayer, and an inward converſation with our Lord; in the conſolations of the Holy Ghoſt, &c; and by this means he paſſed his days in good things (truly ſuch) till he was in an inſtant put in full poſſeſſion, by death, of the ſovereign and infinite good for eternity: whereas they after their ſhort deluding dream of an imaginary happineſs, which is ever flying away from them, awake in a moment, and find themſelves immerſed in the bottomleſs pit of real, endleſs and inſupportable miſeries.

St. ANTONY.

From his Life written by the great St. Athanaſius.

St. Antony was born in Egypt about the middle of the third century, of parents noble according to the world, and wealthy, but withal pious and religious. By them he was trained up at home, in great innocence, ſo as to be a ſtranger in a manner to the world; and was, by his own inclinations, intirely reſtrained from the company of others of his age, and even from frequenting the ſchools with them, for fear of his morals being corrupted by their converſation or bad example. His whole deſire was bent upon God: he frequented the church in the company of his parents, and aſſiſted there with great modeſty, gravity and attention; and endeavoured to follow in his practice the inſtructions and rules of life which he there learnt. He was not fond as children uſually are, of dainties, or of ſuch things as are ſweet, and agreeable to their appetite, but always took what his parents gave him, and ſought nothing more.

He was about eighteen or twenty years old, when his parents dying, left him maſter of all their wealth, which was conſiderable, with a little ſiſter that was very young. But ſcarce ſix months were paſſed after their death, when one day, going to church according to his cuſtom, and thinking with himſelf how the Apoſtles had left all to follow our Lord, and the primitive Chriſtians (Acts iv.) had ſold their poſſeſſions, and laid the price at the feet of the Apoſtles, to be by them diſtributed to ſuch as were in want; and how great would be the reward in heaven, of them that did in this manner; at his coming into the church he heard the goſpel read out of Matt. xix. where our Saviour ſays to the young man that was rich, v. 21. 'If thou wilt be perfect, go ſell what thou haſt, and

'give

'give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in 'heaven, and come follow me.' Theſe words he took as addreſſed by our Lord to himſelf, and particularly deſigned for him: And in conſequence of this divine call, he preſently parted with his whole eſtate in lands, ſold his moveables, which were of great value, and diſtributed the price to the poor, only reſerving a ſmall matter for the uſe of his ſiſter. Some-time after, when he had heard in the church that part of the goſpel read (Matt. vi.) where our Lord warns his diſciples not to be careful for to-morrow, he concluded to part with his houſe alſo, and to diſtribute all that remained to the poor, ſo having recommended his young ſiſter to the care of certain devout virgins, to be trained up in their way of life, he quitted the world for good and all, and entred with a ſtrong reſolution upon the narrow and arduous path of religious perfection.

There were not very many at that time in Egypt that profeſſed a monaſtic life; and thoſe that did, retired not into the deſarts; but only lived in ſeparated cells in the country, at a ſmall diſtance from their reſpective villages. One of theſe, now advanced in years, who from his youth had followed this manner of life, lived in the neighbourhood: Him Antony propoſed to imitate. And accordingly he began to follow the ſame kind of life; but in places ſomething more remote from his own village. And as often as he could hear of any one, that laboured with more diligence than ordinary in the purſuit of virtue and perfection, he was ſure to viſit him, and to ſeek in his converſation and method of life, ſome leſſons for his own inſtruction and edification. In the mean time he laboured with his own hands, for his daily food; and all that he gained over and above what was neceſſary to purchaſe his pittance of bread, he gave to the poor: he prayed very much, and endeavouring quite to forget the world and all his

wordly

wordly kindred, he turned all his affections and deſires towards the purchaſing the hidden treaſure of true wiſdom, and the precious pearl of divine love. In order to this he gave diligent attention to the word of God, contained in the holy ſcriptures, which he heard, and by meditating on it, laid up all thoſe precepts of our Lord in ſuch manner in his ſoul, as never to forget any of them; but to have them always written in his memory as in a book. He envied no one, but had always a great deference for the other ſervants of God; and was continually ſtudying to remark thoſe virtues, in which each one of them excelled, in order to imitate them; and ſo to aſſemble as it were, and unite together in himſelf the different perfections which he obſerved in all the reſt. And thus he quickly outſtripped them all; and yet was always moſt humble and meek, & full of brotherly love and charity; ſo as to be ever moſt dear to them all.

The devil, who was enraged to ſee ſo much ardour in the purſuit of virtue in a perſon ſo young, employed all his arts and ſtratagems to divert him from his holy undertaking, and to bring him back again into the world: and for this end, he ſtrongly repreſented to his imagination his riches and poſſeſſions, which he had quitted; the nobility of his family, the glory of this world, the advantages and pleaſures of a worldly life; and on the other hand the extreme difficulties and labours to be undergone in this way, which he had choſen; the weakneſs of his body, unfit for ſuch extraordinary fatigues; the long time he might have to live under this inſupportable burthen, *&c.* ſuggeſting withal, that it was a crime in him to have abandoned, in the manner he did, his little ſiſter, whom he was obliged to have taken care of: and by theſe and ſuch like repreſentations, he ſtrove to induce him, after he had put his hand to the plow, to look back, and to return again to the world. But

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the Saint overcame all his temptations, by a lively faith in Chriſt crucified, and by continual and fervent prayer. Wherefore the enemy changed his batteries, and aſſaulted him in a moſt violent manner, night and day, ſleeping and waking, with carnal ſuggeſtions, and allurements to luſt. But the holy young man, armed with divine grace, which he procured by earneſt and conſtant prayer, conquered alſo all theſe temptations; by perpetually oppoſing to them watchings, faſtings and mortifications of the fleſh; together with the faith and remembrance of the judgment to come, of the worm that never dies, and of the eternal flames of hell. And by theſe means, he gained ſo complete a victory over the enemy, that he ceaſed to moleſt him any more in this kind. It was in conſequence of this victory, that the unclean ſpirit one day appeared to the Saint, in the ſhape of a moſt filthy, ugly, black boy; bitterly weeping and lamenting, that after having deceived and ſeduced ſo many, he had been overcome by him. And being aſked who he was? He anſwered he was the ſpirit of impurity, who made it his buſineſs to wage a continual war againſt youth, in which he was commonly ſucceſsful; and that it was he, that had ſo often attacked him, but had always been repulſed. Upon this the Saint giving thanks to God, was animated with a new courage againſt this deteſtable ſpirit; and began to ſing aloud thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt. *The Lord is my helper, and I will deſpiſe my enemies* (Pſ. cxvii. 7.) At which the filthy phantom was put to flight.

Theſe firſt victories did not render Antony negligent; as if he might now think himſelf ſecure, and on that account might relent in his ſpiritual exerciſes: for he very well knew that the devil never ſleeps, and that he has a thouſand ways of tricking and deceiving unwary ſouls: eſpecially as he holds a cloſe correſpondence with the fleſh, our domeſtic enemy, and with our unhappy ſelf-love, and its paſſions.

ſions. Wherefore the holy young man reſolved to be ſtill more upon his guard; and to make every day a ſtill greater progreſs in the perfection of a religious life. He chaſtiſed his body, and brought it under ſubjection by extraordinary auſterities; which how difficult ſoever in themſelves, were ſweet and agreeable to him, by reaſon of that ardent affection with which he embraced them. He frequently watched whole nights in prayer. He eat but once in the four and twenty hours; and that not till after ſun-ſet. His food was nothing but bread and ſalt; his drink nothing but water, and this in a ſmall quantity: he ſometimes faſted two days, or more, without taking any thing at all. His bed was at the beſt a ſort of a mat made of bulruſhes, with a covering of hair-cloth; and ſometimes only the bare ground. His application to God was without ceaſing; and like the Apoſtle (Philip iii. 13, 14) *forgetting the things that were behind*, that is all he had done already; he was continually *ſtretching forth himſelf to the things that were before*; *and preſſing* with all his power *towards the mark, to the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus:* ever conſidering himſelf, as if he was juſt then beginning, and thinking of no more than of the preſent day.

All this not being ſufficient to ſatisfy the hunger and thirſt he had after perfection, he choſe for himſelf a dwelling, amongſt the tombs or monuments of the dead. In one of theſe he ſhut himſelf up: where he received from time to time his neceſſary ſuſtenance from a religious man that came to viſit him. The devil, who foreſaw the conſequences he had to apprehend from this new kind of enterprize; and fearing leſt by degrees this young man ſhould draw many by his example into the deſart, to the prejudice of his uſurped empire; was reſolved not to let him go on thus. And therefore (God ſo permitting for the greater merit and glory of his Saint)

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gathering together his infernal ſpirits, he attacked him, one night, with the utmoſt fury, inflicting upon him many ſtripes, and grievous wounds, and torments, till he left him ſtretched out, like one dead, without either ſpeech or motion. In this condition his friend found him the next morning, and carried him back to the village on his ſhoulders; where a great multitude of his kindred and neighbours were aſſembled about him to perform his funeral obſequies. When, behold, towards midnight, coming to himſelf, like one awakened from a deep ſleep, and looking about him, he perceived his friend there watching by him (for the reſt were all aſleep) and he made a ſign to him, to carry him back again to his monument, without waking any of the company. He did ſo, and Antony being now alone, but not yet able to ſupport himſelf on his feet, by reaſon of his late treatment, performed his devotions, as well as he could, lying proſtrate on the floor. At the end of his prayer, lifting up his voice, in defiance of the ſpirits of darkneſs, he cried out, with a lively faith and confidence in his God. 'Lo here am I: here is Antony, ready to encounter with you all: I ſhall not run away; do your worſt; none of you ſhall be able to ſeparate me from the love of Chriſt. Then he began to ſing with the Pſalmiſt, *If whole armies ſhould ſtand together againſt me, my heart ſhall not fear.* Pſ. xxvi. 3.

The enemy could not endure to be thus outbraved, and therefore, reaſſembling his helliſh fiends, he returned to the attack, with greater violence than before: and raiſing on a ſudden a great noiſe, which ſhook the very foundations of the place, he laid it open on all ſides: and entring in, with all his wicked ones, in the ſhape of wild beaſts, and ſerpents of ſundry kinds, he not only ſought to terrify him, with their hideous yellings, roarings, howlings, hiſſings, *&c*, but alſo made him feel their fury in a moſt

moſt ſenſible manner, in the freſh wounds they inflicted upon him. But his courage and conſtancy was proof againſt all their attempts: ſo that notwithſtanding the exceſſive pains, which he felt in his wounded body, he mocked at all their vain efforts, and reproached them with their weakneſs and cowardice, and with thoſe forms of brutes, to which they were now reduced, who formerly had proudly pretended to be like to God. At length Jeſus Chriſt was pleaſed to come in a viſible manner to the aſſiſtance of his ſervant, in this conflict. For lifting up his eyes, he ſaw the top of the place open, and a bright ray of divine light entring in, which diſſipated in a moment both all thoſe infernal ſpirits, and all his pains. The Saint underſtood that his Lord was there: and addreſſing himſelf to him, he ſaid: 'Where 'waſt thou my good Jeſus all this while? Where waſt 'thou? Why didſt thou not come before to heal 'my wounds? The Lord anſwered: I was here, 'Antony: but I waited to ſee thy combat. And now 'becauſe thou haſt fought ſo bravely, and not yielded; I will always aſſiſt thee, and make thy name 'famous over all the earth.' Having heard theſe words, Antony raiſed himſelf up to pray: and found that our Lord had now given him a greater ſtrength, than he had had before. Now he was about thirty five years old when this happened to him.

After this being deſirous of advancing ſtill more in Chriſtian perfection, he took a reſolution of withdrawing himſelf altogether from the converſation of men, and retiring into the deſart. This reſolution he communicated to the old monk his friend, of whom we ſpoke above, propoſing to him to accompany him: but the old man excuſed himſelf, alledging his age, and the novelty of ſuch an enterprize. However Antony, no way diſcouraged, ſet out upon his journey towards the heart of the wilderneſs, at that time utterly uninhabited, and lying at a very great

diſtance from any town or village. As he was going on his way, he ſaw lying on the ground a large diſh of ſilver, with which the enemy ſought to interrupt his journey: but he eaſily diſcovered the artifice; and cried out: 'This is a trick of thine, ſatan: thou 'ſhalt not divert me from my reſolution: keep thy 'ſilver to thyſelf to periſh with thee.' At which words the diſh was immediately diſſolved into ſmoke. Afterwards a large lump of true gold was flung in his way: but this was no more capable of ſtopping him, than the glittering appearance was of the ſilver diſh: but as ſoon as he ſaw it, he run away from it, with his utmoſt ſpeed, as if he were flying from a devouring fire; and proceeded on his way till he came to a mountain, where he found an old forſaken caſtle, full of ſerpents and venomous creatures, which had taken up their lodging there, by reaſon of the long time it had not been inhabited. This place he made choice of for his dwelling; taking in with him his proviſion of bread, which according to his ſcanty allowance might ſuffice him for ſix months, and having a little water there.

At his coming in to take poſſeſſion of this caſtle, all its old inhabitants, the ſerpents, and other venomous creatures fled away, and left the whole place to him: who ſhut up the entrance with ſtones; and for twenty years that he dwelt there, neither went out at any time himſelf, nor ſuffered any one to come in to him: not even thoſe who brought him, at the end of every half year, a freſh proviſion of bread; which they conveyed to him, by getting up to the roof, and ſo letting it down to him. They that came thither (as many did in proceſs of time) out of a deſire of ſeeing him, or learning what was become of him, ſometimes ſtaid the whole night, at the door: and were ſurprized to hear the noiſes, with which the devils ſought to moleſt him; and the voices, as it were of many perſons contending with him, and

ſaying:

saying: 'Why cameſt thou into our habitations? 'What haſt thou to do with the deſart? Get thee 'gone out of theſe coaſts, which belong not to thee; 'never think to be able to ſtay here; or to reſiſt our 'attacks.' When they that were without heard theſe or the like words, at firſt they imagined ſome men had found means to get in to his habitation, and were there contending with him: but looking through the chinks, and ſeeing that he was all alone, they underſtood that the voices they had heard were of evil ſpirits, ſeeking to drive him thence. And when, upon this occaſion, they were very much frightned, and called to Antony, begging him to help them: he comforted, and encouraged them from within, bidding them to arm themſelves with the ſign of the croſs, and to make no account of theſe vain terrours. At other times when they came, and ſcarce expected to find him alive, they heard him chearfully ſinging within, and repeating thoſe words of the 67th pſalm: *Let God ariſe, and let his enemies be ſcattered: and let them that hate him flee from before his face: as ſmoke vaniſheth ſo let them vaniſh away: as wax melteth before the fire ſo let the wicked periſh at the preſence of God.*

At the end of twenty years, which he had ſpent with God, in this ſolitude, Antony, yielding to the importunity of the multitudes, that reſorted to him; and were even ready to force their way into his habitation: more eſpecially as many of them deſired alſo to learn and to imitate his manner of life, came forth, as it were ou of a heavenly ſanctuary, with ſuch a ſerenity in his countenance, a livelineſs in his colour and face, and a ſtrength and vigour in his whole perſon, as was admired by all that ſaw him. And here God was pleaſed to work many miracles by him, in caſting out devils from ſuch as were poſſeſſed, and healing various diſeaſes. The Saint took occaſion, at the ſame time, to make powerful exhortations to thoſe that addreſſed themſelves to him: he comforted

the afflicted, he inſtructed the ignorant, he reconciled ſuch as were at variance: he was earneſt with all to look to the welfare of their ſouls, and to prefer nothing before the love of Chriſt. He ſet before the eyes of his auditors, the greatneſs of the good things to come in a happy eternity; and the infinite goodneſs and mercy of God; and his benefits and love for us; which he has particularly manifeſted in not ſparing his own Son, but delivering him up to death for the ſalvation of us all. And by theſe and ſuch like diſcourſes, he brought over a great number of his hearers to a contempt of all thoſe things that paſs with time, and to an effectual reſolution of wholly dedicating the remainder of the ſhort days of their mortality, to the love and ſervice of their God, in a ſolitary and religious life. Thus by degrees the deſarts and mountains began to be peopled with a number of holy ſouls (all acknowledging Antony for their father, their founder, and their maſter) who by the purity and ſanctity of their lives, ſeemed to be ſo many Angels in human bodies. They renounced all the honours, riches and pleaſures of this world; or rather they exchanged them for far greater and more ſolid honours, riches and pleaſures even here, and for ſuch as ſhall never end hereafter. They watched and prayed without ceaſing; they meditated often on the word of God; they ſung day and night the praiſes of God; they kept in a manner a continual faſt; they laboured with their hands, for their own ſupport; and to have wherewith all to ſupply the neceſſities of their indigent neighbours: In fine, they all lived in a holy union, and perfect charity, without murmuring or detractions: and had no other ambition or ſtrife, but who ſhould outdo his neighbour, in all kind of Chriſtian virtues. So that to ſee this multitude of ſervants of God, ſeparated at a diſtance, both in place and manners, from the children of the world, in thoſe vaſt deſarts,

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and leading there ſuch angelical lives; was enough to make any one cry out with Balaam, Numb. 24. *How beautiful are thy pavilions, O Jacob, and thy tents O Iſrael, as valleys overſhaded with woods, as well watered gardens near the rivers: as tabernacles which the Lord hath pitched,* &c.

And here St. Athanaſius ſets down at large an excellent diſcourſe, which Antony made one day, at the deſire, and for the inſtruction of theſe his diſciples. In which, after earneſtly exhorting them to fervor and conſtancy, in purſuing their holy undertaking; ſo as never to ſlacken their pace, but to renew their reſolutions every day, as if they were but juſt now beginning; and to ſtrive to advance by great ſteps every day towards religious perfection: he puts them in mind: Firſt of the ſhortneſs of the time of this mortal life, and of the length of eternity: and how ſmall a matter all that is, which God requires of us, for the purchaſing of eternal life: that all the labours and ſufferings of this life ſhall quickly have an end, but our reward ſhall continue forever. 2ly, Therefore he would not have them think, they had done any great matter, in parting with a little ground, or houſes, or money; from which they muſt have otherwiſe, whether they would or no, in a ſhort time, been ſeparated by death: ſince what they were to receive from our Lord, in exchange for what they had left for his ſake, would be infinitely more valuable than the poſſeſſion of the whole earth, and would be theirs for all eternity. 3ly, He inculcates to them that a Chriſtian ought not to ſet his affection, or beſtow his care upon any of thoſe things, which he cannot take away with him when he dies: but only on ſuch things, as may bring him on in his way to heaven; and there continue with him to eternity: ſuch as true wiſdom, purity of ſoul and body, chriſtian juſtice, fortitude, charity, and the peace of the ſoul, by the victory over our paſſions:

for theſe are the true goods of a Chriſtian, which alone are worthy of his love. 4ly, He puts them in mind, that they are ſtrictly obliged, in conſequence of their creation, to dedicate their whole lives to the ſervice of that Lord, who made them for this very end, that they ſhould be his ſervants; and who upon all manner of titles, has an indiſputable right to all their ſervice: and that neither their paſt, nor preſent labours are to exempt them from continuing in this ſervice till death: ſo that they muſt reſolve to labour to the end, if they would not loſe their crown: relying always on the aſſiſtance of their good God, who never forſakes them, that do not firſt forſake him. 5ly, He recommends to them the remembrance of death; of the certainty of it, and the uncertainty of the hour in which we ſhall be called for hence; of the judgment that is to follow after death, and of the eternity to come; as ſo many powerful reſtraints to keep them from all ſin; and as ſovereign means to cure their ſloth, to ſpur them on to all virtue, to wean their affections from tranſitory things; and to teach them to tread under their feet, the riches and pleaſures of the world, which we muſt ſo ſuddenly part with. 6ly, He tells them that the Greeks took great pains, and travelled into diſtant countries, in order to meet with maſters, from whom they might learn vain and empty ſciences, ſuch as were of no ſervice to their ſouls in order to eternity: But that the Chriſtian in order to acquire true wiſdom, and the ſcience of the ſaints, which conducts to eternal life, needed to go no farther, than into his own ſoul; that there he ſhould find his true maſter, (if he ſought him by a ſpirit of recollection and prayer) there he ſhould find the kingdom of God, and all good. 7ly, He exhorts them to fight in a particular manner againſt the tyranny, as he calls it, of the paſſion of anger, as a mortal evil, and a capital enemy of the juſtice of God: and therefore he would have them

them to keep a conſtant guard upon their own hearts. The more becauſe of the many enemies, that are continually waging war againſt Chriſtians, but more eſpecially againſt religious men and women; and who employ a thouſand tricks, and artifices to deceive the unwary. And here, as one that had long experience in this kind of warfare, he acquaints them with the different ſtratagems, and manifold temptations, by which theſe wicked ſpirits labour, without ceaſing, to withdraw religious ſouls from the ſervice of God, and to bring them back to the broad road of the world, and to the ways of iniquity and ſin: but for their comfort and encouragement, he aſſures them, that theſe enemies have no power over ſuch as heartily reſiſt them, and deſpiſe their ſuggeſtions: that Chriſt has triumphed over them by his death: and that a lively faith in him, a purity and ſincerity in ſeeking him: a diligence in the ſpiritual exerciſes, of watching, praying, faſting, *&c.* together with the virtues of meekneſs, voluntary poverty, humility, contempt of vain-glory, and eſpecially an ardent devotion to Chriſt crucified, are arms, which all the powers of hell cannot withſtand.

By ſuch leſſons as theſe, and eſpecially by the great example of their maſter, the diſciples of Antony were encouraged, and ſpurred on to make a daily progreſs in the way of God: when the perſecution, which had been firſt ſet on foot by Diocletian, and carried on with great fury by Maximian Galerius, raged exceedingly in Egypt, (where it crowned innumerable martyrs) and many were led to Alexandria out of the country, to be put to death for Chriſt. On this occaſion Antony left his cell, to follow theſe that were going to be victims of Chriſt: ſaying to his diſciples, 'let us go to the glorious triumphs of 'our brethren: that we may either have a ſhare 'with them in the fight, or at leaſt be ſpectators of 'their conflict.' He was in hopes of obtaining for

himſelf the crown of martyrdom: but could not deliver himſelf up; nor get to be aſſociated with the glorious confeſſors, that were condemned to the mines, or confined to the priſons. However when any were brought before the judge, he accompanied them in the court, and with great liberty and diligence exhorted them to conſtancy and perſeverance. And when they were ſentenced to die, he rejoiced in their victory, as if it had been his own, and failed not to accompany them to the place of execution, to be a witneſs of their happy triumph. The judge ſeeing the courage and zeal of Antony and his companions, publiſhed an order, prohibiting any of the monks to be preſent in court, at the trials of the Chriſtians; and enjoining to them all to depart from the city. Upon theſe orders the others abſconded for that day: but Antony, fearing nothing, waſhed his garments, and took the next opportunity to preſent himſelf, in a more eminent place to the ſight of the judge, deſiring nothing more than to ſuffer for Chriſt. But God was pleaſed to accept of his good-will, and to reſerve his ſervant, for the benefit of innumerable ſouls. However he continued aſſiſting and encouraging upon all occaſions the confeſſors of Chriſt, till the ſtorm of the perſecution was blown over: and then he returned with a new fervour to his former ſolitude. Where he redoubled his watchings and faſtings: wearing always a garment of haircloth, next to his ſkin, and never waſhing his body; inſomuch that no one ever ſaw Antony naked during his life.

And now he began to ſhut himſelf up for a time in his cell, without admitting any one to come in to him. But he could not hinder many from reſorting to his door, to ſeek a cure for their different maladies, through the experience they had of the miracles that God frequently wrought by him; and even ſtaying there all night: ſo that partly to avoid the diſtrac-

diſtractions cauſed by this concourſe of people, and partly to fly the danger of vain-glory; he took a reſolution to go as far as the higher Thebais, where no man might know him. Wherefore, taking ſome bread with him, he went to the bank of the Nile, and there ſat down, waiting for ſome boat, that might paſs that way. And here he heard a voice, ſaying to him 'Antony, whither art thou going? And to what 'end?' He, as one accuſtomed to ſuch colloquies, anſwered without fear. 'Becauſe the people will not 'let me be quiet; but require things of me, that 'are out of the reach of my weakneſs; I have thought 'it beſt to go away to the higher Thebais. If thou 'goeſt, ſaid the voice, to the place thou propoſeſt, 'thou ſhalt endure a greater, yea a double labour: 'but if thou deſireſt to be quiet indeed, go thy way 'now to ſuch a place, naming a mountain in the 'heart of the wilderneſs. But who, ſaid Antony, 'ſhall ſhew me the way? for there are no tracks 'or paths that lead thither: and I know nothing of 'the country.' He that ſpoke with him replied, that there were ſome Saracens, or Arabians, at hand, who were come into Egypt to trade, and that they would ſhew him the way. Antony followed this heavenly direction, and going up to the Saracens, deſired they would take him along with them, in their journey through the deſart: and after having travelled with them three days and three nights, he arrived at the place appointed him by heaven: which was a very high mountain; at the foot of which there was a ſpring of clear water, and in the adjacent field a few wild palm-trees. Here then he reſolved to fix his abode, where he might live quite ſeparate from the converſation of men. As to his food, he contented himſelf with a little bread (which the Saracens, admiring his virtue, gave him at parting; or beſtowed upon him afterwards when they paſſed that way) and with the ſmall proviſion of wild

wild dates, which the palms afforded him: till his brethren, having found out the place of his retreat, brought him neceſſaries from time to time. Antony deſired to eaſe them of that trouble, and having procured, by their means, a proper inſtrument, and ſome wheat; and found a little ſpot of ground fit for the purpoſe, he ſowed the wheat, which brought him a crop ſufficient for his uſe; to his great ſatisfaction, for that he was thus enabled to live by the labour of his hands, without being troubleſome to any one. He alſo made a little garden for herbs, to entertain his brethren with, when they came wearied to him through the burning deſarts. This ſpot of ground was expoſed to the beaſts, which reſorted thither for the ſake of the ſpring, and did no ſmall damage to Antony, by feeding upon his herbs and his corn, wherefore having caught one of them, he ſaid to them all: why do you this wrong to me, who do none to you? Get ye gone: and in the name of the Lord, never come hither any more. From which time, they were never ſeen to come near that place.

Whilſt Antony was here entertaining himſelf with his God, the devils his unwearied enemies ceaſed not to wage a perpetual war againſt him: but he deſpiſed all their efforts, and by his uſual arms of a lively faith, and fervent prayer, always triumphed over them. His diſciples, who came to viſit him, were ſometimes witneſſes of his conflicts: and related how they had heard the tumultous noiſe and voices of a numerous people, with the rattling of arms; and had ſeen the whole mountain covered with a multitude of devils; and Antony fighting againſt them, and putting them all to flight by his prayers. 'It is indeed worthy of admiration, ſays St. Atha-'naſius, that in ſo vaſt a wilderneſs, one man alone 'ſhould have ſtood his ground ſo long, without 'either apprehending the daily encounters, he met 'with from wicked ſpirits; or yielding to the fury of

'of ſo many wild beaſts, and ſerpents, as ſwarm in 'thoſe deſarts. But it was with good reaſon that 'David ſung Pſ. cxxiv. *They that truſt in the Lord 'ſhall be as mount Sion, they ſhall not be moved forever.* 'For ſo Antony keeping his mind firm, quiet and 'unmoveable in God, put all the devils to flight 'and had *the beaſts of the earth at peace with him.*' Job v. 23. and ſubject to him. One night when he was watching in prayer, the devil brought together about him, ſuch a multitude of wild beaſts, that it ſeemed as if there were none left behind in the whole deſart: and all of them encompaſſing him on every ſide, with open jaws, threatened to tear him in pieces. The Saint underſtanding the artifice of the malignant ſpirit, ſaid to them unconcernedly: 'If the Lord has 'given you any power over me, uſe that power in 'devouring of me. But if you are brought hither by 'devils, get you gone without delay, for I am a ſer-'vant of Chriſt.' He had no ſooner ſpoke theſe words but all this multitude of wild beaſts fled away, and left him alone to continue his devotions. Another time, when he was at work in the day, making baſkets according to his cuſtom, to exchange them for the proviſions which the brethren brought him; a monſter preſented itſelf before him, which appeared to be half a man and half an aſs. He made the ſign of the croſs at the ſight: and ſaid I am a ſervant of Chriſt. 'If thou art ſent to me, 'here I am: I dont run away.' At theſe words the monſter was inſtantly put to flight, and falling down in the midſt of its flight, was burſt and deſtroyed: to ſhew how all the attempts of Satan againſt Antony ſhould in the end periſh and come to nothing.

After ſome time the brethren prevailed on the man of God, to come down from his mountain, in order to viſit their monaſteries. Now in their way homeward through thoſe burning deſarts, their proviſion of water quite failed them; and as none could

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be found there, and the weather was violently hot, they were all in danger of periſhing. Antony on this occaſion had recourſe to prayer; and withdrawing himſelf to a little diſtance from the company, and falling upon his knees, implored, with his hands ſtretched forth to heaven, the mercy of the Lord. When behold the tears which he ſhed, preſently brought out of the earth, in that ſame place, a ſpring of water, with which they both refreſhed their own thirſt, ſaved the life of their camel, and filled their veſſels, for the remainder of their journey. The Saint was received, with great joy, by all the religious, as their common father; and conceived no leſs joy in himſelf, to ſee the fervour and reſolution, with which they all applied themſelves to their ſpiritual exercices. And that he might not ſeem to come to them from his mountain empty handed, he made them excellent exhortations in order to their ſpiritual progreſs. He had alſo the comfort here to hear the agreeable news, that his ſiſter, whom he had left ſo young in the world, was now grown old in the profeſſion of virginity, and was become miſtreſs and ſuperior of other holy virgins in a religious life.

After ſome days Antony returned again to his mountain: where he now received more frequent viſits; as well from his own religious, as from others, who being poſſeſſed or obſeſſed with evil ſpirits, or afflicted with divers infirmities, had recourſe to his prayers, for their delivery: in which kinds God wrought many miracles by him; favouring him alſo with prophetical light, and other extraordinary graces and gifts. He exhorted all that came to him 'to have a ſtrong faith in Jeſus Chriſt: to love him 'with all their hearts: to keep their minds pure from 'all evil thoughts; and their bodies from all un-'cleanneſs: not to ſuffer themſelves to be impoſed 'upon by the love of the belly: to hate vain glory: 'to pray very often: to ſing pſalms to the divine 'praiſe,

'praiſe, every morning, noon and night: to medi-
'tate on the precepts of the word of God; to have
'the great examples of the Saints always before their
'eyes, in order to ſpur themſelves on to the prac-
'tice of all virtues: *not to let the ſun ſet upon their*
'*anger* Eph. iv: which precept of the apoſtle he
'applied to all other ſins; recommending to all to
'call themſelves to a ſtrict account by a daily exa-
'mination of conſcience, and to repent and amend
'without delay, whenſoever they found themſelves
'to have failed in any thing. He added that if they
'did not diſcover any guilt in themſelves, they muſt
'not therefore be puffed up with ſelf conceit, or pre-
'ſume to juſtify themſelves, and deſpiſe others; but
'rather fear, leſt their ſelf-love ſhould blind them
'and deceive them; remembring that an all-ſeeing
'God is to be their judge: that his judgments are
'very different from thoſe of men: and that, as the
'wiſeman writes Prov. 14 and 16, *there is a way that*
'*ſeemeth right to man; and the latter end thereof leadeth*
'*to death.*

One day, about the ninth hour (that is, about three of the clock in the afternoon) when he had begun his prayer, before the taking of his meal, he had a rapt or extaſy, in which he ſaw himſelf in ſpirit carried up on high by Angels; and the demons of the air oppoſing his paſſage; and alledging againſt him the ſins of his younger days, from his very childhood: and when the Angels replied, that theſe ſins by the mercy of Chriſt had been forgiven; and bid them charge him, if they could, with any thing material, that he had committed, ſince he conſecrated himſelf to God in a religious ſtate of life: theſe lying ſpirits forged againſt him many falſe accuſations, which they could not prove; and therefore they were forced to leave the paſſage free for him. Upon this, Antony returned to himſelf, but ſo greatly affected with what he had ſeen, and with

with this dreadful and dangerous conflict, that the poor ſoul has to go through, with theſe princes of darkneſs; that he forgot his food, and ſpent the whole remainder of the day, and all the night in ſighs and lamentations; conſidering the dangers from theſe wicked ſpirits, that threaten the ſouls of men both in life and death: which nevertheleſs unthinking mortals ſo little apprehend. Another time, when his diſciples had been inquiring of him, concerning the ſtate of ſouls immediately after death, he was called upon in the night by a voice ſaying: Antony ariſe, go out, and ſee. He aroſe, and went out, and looking up towards heaven, he ſaw a ſpecter of a monſtrous height, and dreadful aſpect, whoſe head reached the clouds: he ſaw alſo perſons with wings, that ſought to fly up to heaven: and he perceived how the monſter, with hands ſtretched out, ſtrove to ſtop them in their paſſage; and how he caught ſome of them, and caſt them down to the earth; but could not ſtop others from flying up above his head; and ſo mounting to heaven. By which viſion he was given to underſtand how the devil had power to ſtop the flight of thoſe departing ſouls, that were in ſin; but had no power over pure and holy ſouls, to hinder their flying up to heaven. Theſe viſions Antony related to his diſciples: not out of oſtentation, or vain glory (for he was always averſe to attributing any thing to himſelf; or ſuffering any thing to be aſcribed to him) but merely for their inſtruction and edification.

As to the reſt, there was nothing more meek and patient than Antony: nothing more humble. He had a particular reſpect and veneration for all the clergy; giving even to the loweſt clerk in minor orders the preference before himſelf; and ever bowing down his head before biſhops, or prieſts, to crave their benediction. He that was ſo great a maſter himſelf in ſpirituals, and ſo divinely taught, was not aſhamed

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to ſeek inſtruction, not only from the clerks, that came to viſit him, but even from his own diſciples; and whatſoever good he heard from any one, he humbly and thankfully acknowledged himſelf aſſiſted thereby. Amongſt other gifts with which he was favoured by our Lord, he was particularly remarkable for an admirable grace that ſhewed itſelf in his countenance; which diſtinguiſhed him in ſuch manner from all the reſt of the holy inhabitants of the deſarts, that any ſtranger that came to viſit him, though he happened to be in the company of a multitude of other monks; leaving all the others, would be ſure to run up to him: as if the purity of his ſoul had ſhone forth from his very face: which was always modeſtly chearful and amiable; and never altered either by proſperity, or adverſity. However he would have no communication with ſchiſmaticks or hereticks: but exhorted all that came near him, to fly their dangerous converſation and impious doctrines. He had a particular horrour for the blaſphemies of the Arians; whom he conſidered as the forerunners of Antichriſt. He even quitted for a while his ſolitude (at the deſire of Athanaſius and the catholic biſhops) to go to Alexandria to confute their wicked aſſertions: where by his doctrine and miracles, he not only effectually confuted the hereticks, and confirmed the catholicks in their faith, but alſo brought over a great number of infidels to the Chriſtian religion. The heathen philoſophers alſo divers times came to diſpute with him about religion; imagining they ſhould eaſily entangle, with their captious reaſonings and learned ſophiſtry, a man ſo entirely illiterate, and an utter ſtranger to all human ſciences, as Antony was known to be: but they were ſtrangely ſurprized to find with what depth of wiſdom, he anſwered all their objections; proved to them the truth of the Chriſtian religion, in a manner to which they

they knew not what to reply: and even confirmed it with miracles wrought in their preſence.

The reputation of Antony's ſanctity and heavenly wiſdom, was not confined to Egypt: it ſpread itſelf far and near through a great part of the known world; it even reached the imperial court, inſomuch that the emperor Conſtantine the great, and his ſons Conſtans and Conſtantius wrote ſeveral times to him, and begged that he would pleaſure them with an anſwer. As to his part, he made very little account of this honour, and told his diſciples, that they were not to think it much, that an emperor, who was no more than a mortal man, ſhould write to him; but rather they ought to admire and to bear always in mind that the eternal God had been ſo good as to write his law for man, and to ſend down his only Son, to deliver his word to them. However at the deſire of all the brethren, he returned an anſwer to theſe princes: in which after congratulating with them, for their believing in Chriſt, and worſhiping him; he gave them wholeſome documents, for the welfare of their ſouls: adviſing them not to make any great account of their worldly grandeur and power, or of any of thoſe things that paſs away with time, and never to forget that they were mortals, who muſt quickly appear before another judge. He alſo put them in mind of their obligation of ſhewing clemency to their ſubjects, of rendering them juſtice, and of ſuccouring the poor and diſtreſſed: and that they muſt remember that the true and everlaſting king of all ages is Jeſus Chriſt alone.

After Antony had finiſhed the buſineſs that brought him to Alexandria, he haſtened home to his cell on the mountain, and to his uſual exercices and auſterities. For he uſed to ſay that a religious man converſing with ſeculars, out of his monaſtery, was like a fiſh out of the water, which is in danger of periſhing, except it quickly be reſtored again to its element: and

and therefore for his own part, he never would come out of his ſolitude, but when ſome work of great charity obliged him to it. However he willingly received ſeculars that came to him, and entertained them with heavenly diſcourſes, exhorting them to look beyond this world, and to labour for a happineſs that ſhall have no end. And ſuch was the unction and efficacy God gave to his words, that many were moved by him to give up their honours, their riches, and all their worldly hopes, in order to dedicate themſelves eternally to the ſame happy ſervice, in which they ſaw him engaged. He ſeemed to have been given to the land of Egypt by our Lord, as an excellent phyſician; to heal all their ſpiritual diſeaſes. For whoſoever came to him in his troubles and temptations, found in his converſation a ſenſible benefit, ſo that if he came with ſorrow he returned with joy, if he came with rancour in his heart againſt his neighbour he returned with diſpoſitions of peace and charity: if he came oppreſſed with the ſenſe of his poverty, and diſtreſs, he returned with a contempt of the riches of this world, and a willingneſs to take up the croſs, and to wear the livery of Jeſus Chriſt: the lukewarm learnt from him, to be fervent in the ſervice of God: the very libertines returned from him, with a deſire of embracing a chaſt and penitential life. For ſuch was the gift he had of diſcerning ſpirits, that he ſeemed to read in the faces of all, the diſpoſitions and ſtate of their ſouls; and accordingly accommodated his inſtructions and preſcriptions to the nature and quality of their maladies. Nor was this benefit confined to Egypt alone: but as the fame of Antony had reached all parts of the world; ſo men came from all parts of the world to ſee him; and no one viſited him without fruit; no one ever complained that he had loſt his labour in coming to him, how long or difficult ſoever his journey might have been.

The reſort of people to him did not interrupt his attention to God in his interior; no more than his daily labours, which he ſanctified with mental prayer. Oftentimes when he was walking, or ſitting with his viſiters, he was raviſhed out of himſelf, ſo as to remain for a long time inſenſible; at which time many ſecrets of heaven were revealed to him. Once in particular, he ſaw a viſion in his extaſy, by which was foretold two years before hand, the cruel havock that the Arians would make in the church of Alexandria: which, when he returned to himſelf, he related with many ſighs and tears to thoſe that were then with him; but then added for their comfort, that this ſtorm ſhould quickly blow over, and the church be reſtored to her former luſtre. This perſecution was raiſed againſt the church of Alexandria, when the Arians, having procured the baniſhment of St. Athanaſius, intruded one Gregory, a man of their faction to be biſhop in his place: upon which occaſion Balacius, an Arian, the commander of the troops, particularly exerted himſelf in perſecuting the faithful: inſomuch that he ordered even the ſacred virgins and the religious men to be publickly ſcourged, as if they had been the vileſt malefactors. St. Antony wrote to him, to deter him from this cruelty: and his letter was to this effect. 'I ſee the wrath of God coming 'upon thee: ceaſe to perſecute the Chriſtians, leſt 'that wrath take hold on thee, which already threa-'tens thee with approaching deſtruction.' The unhappy man ſlighted the warning of the Saint, and ſpitting upon the letter, flung it down upon the ground: then after having abuſed the perſons that brought it; he bid them go, and tell Antony, that he ſhould ſerve him alſo in the ſame manner, as he had done theſe monks, for whom he intereſted himſelf. But not many days paſſed, before the vengeance of God overtook the wretch; when, as he was riding out to a place in the neighbourhood, in the company

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of Neſtorius the governor, one of his own horſes, who was always before remarkably gentle and quiet, with a ſudden bite brought him down to the ground, and ſtanding over him gnawed and tore his thighs, in ſo terrible a manner, that he died within three days.

And now the time drawing near when Antony, being now about one hundred and five years of age, ſhould exchange his mortal pilgrimage for a happy immortality; he went, according to his cuſtom, to viſit his brethren, that were in the nearer deſert, ſignifying to them that his diſſolution was at hand, and that this was the laſt time they ſhould ſee him. Theſe words drew tears from all their eyes: and they all embraced him as a parent juſt now departing from them into another world. They would have detained him with them, deſiring to be preſent at his death; but this he would not conſent to: but after having given them his laſt inſtructions; ſtrongly exhorting them to fervour, and perſeverance in their holy inſtitute, and to conſtancy in the catholick faith; ſhewing a great joy that he was now ſhortly to go from this place of baniſhment to his true and everlaſting home; he bid them his laſt farewel, and made haſte back to his mountain. Here after ſome few months finding his death drawing near, he called to him his two diſciples, (who for the laſt fifteen years of his life, had their cells in his neighbourhood) and ſaid to them. 'My children, I am now going, ac-
'cording to the expreſſion of the Scripture, the way
'of my fathers: for now the Lord calls for me: I
'long now to ſee the heavenly manſions. But as for
'you, my dearly beloved, I admoniſh you to beware
'leſt you loſe on a ſudden the labour of ſo long a
'time. But every day conſider yourſelves as if you had
'but that day entered upon a religious life, and the
'ſtrength of your purpoſe ſhall daily encreaſe. You
'know the various artifices of the devils: you have
'alſo ſeen their furious aſſaults; and how weak and

'cowardly they are. Have an ardent love for Jeſus: 'let the faith of his name be ſtrongly fixed in your 'minds: a ſtrong faith in Jeſus will put all the devils 'to flight. Remember alſo the leſſons I have given 'you; and the uncertain condition of this mortal 'life, which may be cut off any day: and make no 'doubt but the heavenly reward ſhall be given you. 'Avoid the poiſon of ſchiſmaticks and hereticks, and 'follow my example in keeping them at a diſtance, 'becauſe they are enemies of Chriſt. And ever make 'it your principal care to keep the commandments 'of the Lord: that ſo after your death the ſaints of 'God may receive you as their friends and acquain-'tance into the eternal tabernacles.' He added as his laſt requeſt to them that they ſhould bury his body privately, and let no man know the place: leſt the Egyptians, according to their cuſtom, ſhould take it up and embalm it, and keep it as they did their mummies. 'As to my garments, ſaid he, give 'my ſheep ſkin, and this old cloak, which I lie upon, 'to biſhop Athanaſius, who brought it me new: 'let biſhop Serapion (another generous defender of 'the faith) have my other ſheep ſkin: and keep my 'garment of haircloth for yourſelves: and fare ye 'well my children: for Antony is going, and ſhall 'now be no longer with you in this world.

When he had made an end of ſpeaking, as his diſciples were kiſſing him, he drew up his feet a little, and met death with a joyful countenance (anno 356) breathing out his pure ſoul into the hands of the Angels, who were there ready to receive him, and carry him to the happy regions of eternal bliſs. His diſciples buried him privately, as he had deſired: and his legatee, ſays St. Athanaſius (ſpeaking of himſelf) 'who had the happineſs to re-'ceive by the orders of bleſſed Antony, his old cloak 'and his ſheep ſkin, embraces Antony in his gifts: 'and as if he had been enriched by him with a large inheritance,

'inheritance, is rejoiced, by occaſion of his garments, 'with having before the eyes of his ſoul the image of 'his ſanctity.' This ſame holy doctor of the church, and champion of the faith, wrote the life of St. Antony, from his own knowledge of him, and from the teſtimonies of his diſciples: (which life we have here abridged) which was then, and has been ever ſince, received, embraced, and admired, in all parts of the world, by all well-wiſhers to Chriſtian piety, for the great leſſons it contains. The ſhare it had in bringing to a happy concluſion the converſion of the great St. Auguſtine, is too remarkable to be paſſed over in ſilence.

This Saint relates in his Confeſſions (L. 8. C. 6.) how, when he was as yet ſtruggling under the load of his wicked habits, which he could not reſolve effectually to caſt off; he was viſited one day by Pontitianus, one that belonged to the emperor's court, but a good chriſtian; who 'began a diſcourſe, 'concerning Antony a monk of Egypt, whoſe name, 'ſays St. Auguſtine, ſpeaking to God, was exceed-'ingly illuſtrious amongſt thy ſervants, but to that 'hour was unknown to us. Which he perceiving 'ſtaid the longer upon that ſubject; informing us 'of the life of ſo great a man; and wondering that 'we had heard nothing of him. We were aſtoniſh-'ed (he ſpeaks of himſelf, and his friend Alipius) 'to hear of thy miracles ſo very well atteſted, done 'ſo lately, and almoſt in our own days, in the true 'faith, and in the Catholic church: and indeed all 'of us wondered: we that they were ſo great, and 'he that they were unknown to us. Thence he 'turned his diſcourſe to the ſocieties of monaſteries, 'and to their manner of life, yielding a ſweet odour 'to thee, and to the fruitful breaſts of thoſe barren 'deſarts; of all which we had heard nothing: and 'yet there was at Milan, without the walls, a con-'vent full of good brothers, under the care of Am-

'broſe, and we knew it not. He proceeded in his 'diſcourſe, whilſt we in ſilence were attentive to 'him: and he related how upon a certain time, 'when the court was at Triers, and the emperor 'one afternoon was entertained with the ſports of 'the *Circus*; he and three others of his companions 'went out a walking among the gardens, near the 'walls of the city; and there, as it happened, go-'ing two and two together, one with him took one 'way, and the other two another: and that theſe 'two, as they were wandering about, lighted upon 'a certain cottage, where ſome ſervants of thine 'dwelt, *poor in ſpirit, of whom is the kingdom of hea-'ven* (Matt. v.) and there they found a book, in 'which was written the life of Antony. This life 'one of them began to read, and to admire, and to 'be inflamed with it; and as he was reading, to 'think of embracing this ſame kind of life, and of 'quitting his worldly office in the emperors court to 'become thy ſervant. Then ſuddenly being filled 'with a holy love, and a wholeſome ſhame, and 'being angry at himſelf, he caſt his eyes upon his 'friend, and ſaid to him: "Tell me, I pray thee, "with all theſe pains we take in the world, whither "would our ambition aſpire to? what do we ſeek? "what is it we propoſe to ourſelves in this emploi-"ment? can we even hope for any thing greater in "the court, than to arrive at the friendſhip and "favour of the emperor? and there, what is there "that is not brittle and full of danger? and through "how many dangers muſt we aſcend to this greater "danger? and how long will all this continue? "But the friend and favorite of God, if I pleaſe, I "may become now preſently; and ſo forever." 'He ſaid this, and labouring in travail of a new 'life he returned his eyes to the pages, and read, 'and was changed where thou ſaweſt, and his mind 'was ſtripped of the world, as ſoon appeared. For

'whilſt

'whilſt he was reading, and rowling to and fro the 'waves of his heart, he caſt out ſome ſighs and 'groans; and at length concluded and reſolved up-'on better things; and being now wholly thine, he 'ſaid to his friend: "I have now entirely bid adieu "to that former hope of ours, and am fully reſolved "upon being a ſervant of God: and upon begin-"ning from this hour, and in this place. If thou "art not willing to do the ſame, at leaſt do not offer "to oppoſe my reſolution. The other replied: "That he would ſtick by him, as a companion, "to ſerve with him ſo great a maſter, and for ſo "great a pay." By this time Pontitianus, and the 'other that was with him, ſeeking after them, came 'to the ſame place, and having found them, minded 'them of returning home, becauſe the day was far 'ſpent. But they acquainting them with their pur-'poſe and determination; and in what manner they 'had taken this reſolution, and were confirmed in it; 'requeſted of them, that if they pleaſed not to join 'with them, they would give them no diſturbance. 'Whereupon they, being nothing altered from what 'they were before, bewailed themſelves nevertheleſs, 'as he ſaid, and piouſly congratulated with them, 'and recommended themſelves to their prayers: 'and ſo with a heart weighed downwards towards 'the earth, returned to the palace; whilſt the other 'two, with a heart elevated to heaven, continued 'in that cottage. And both of them were contrac-'ted to young ladies, who as ſoon as they heard theſe 'things, conſecrated in like manner their virginity 'to thee. Theſe things Pontitianus related to us.' So far St. Auguſtine, who declares in the following chapter, the wonderful operation this diſcourſe had upon him: and how as ſoon as Pontitianus was gone, he ſet upon Alipius, and cried out, 'what is this 'we ſuffer? what is this thou haſt been hearing? 'the unlearned riſe up, and take heaven by force:

'and we with all our learning, without courage, or 'heart, ſee how we ſtill wallow in fleſh and blood. 'Are we aſhamed to follow them, becauſe they have 'got the ſtart of us, and are gone before us? And ought 'we not to be more aſhamed, if we do not ſo much as 'follow?' With theſe words, he hurried himſelf away into the garden; where after a ſtrong conflict, he was at length fully converted, by taking up, by the admonition of a voice from heaven, the epiſtles of St. Paul, and reading there the ſentence that firſt occurred, Rom. xiii. 13, 14. *Not in rioting and drunkenneſs, not in chambering and impurities, not in ſtrife and envy; but put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not proviſion for the fleſh in its concupiſcences.*

ST. HILARION.

From his life written by St. Jerome.

HILARION was born at a village called Thabatha, five miles from the city of Gaza in Paleſtine, of infidel parents; who ſent him, when he was very young, to ſtudy at Alexandria: where he gave proofs of an excellent genius for his age, and of good diſpoſitions to virtue. Here he embraced the faith of Chriſt, and young as he was, could find no pleaſure in theatrick ſhows, the incentives of luſt, or any other worldly diverſions, but only in frequenting the church, and in religious exerciſes. Hearing of the fame of St. Antony, he went into the deſart to viſit him; and putting off his ſecular habit, in order to embrace the ſame inſtitute; he remained with him about two months: making it his buſineſs to obſerve well, and to learn the whole order and method of his life; his continual prayer, his humility, his charity, his mortification, and all his other virtues. Then returning into his own country, with ſome other religious men, and finding there that his parents were now dead, he diſtributed his whole ſubſtance, partly to his brethren, and partly to the poor; without reſerving any thing at all for himſelf: bearing in his mind that ſaying of our Lord: *He that doth not renounce all that he poſſeſſeth, cannot be my diſciple.* Luke xiv. 33. Thus ſtript of the world, and armed with Chriſt, being only in the ſixteenth year of his age, he took a reſolution to retire into the wilderneſs (which lies on the left hand of the road that leads from Gaza into Egypt) neither apprehending the dangers, which his worldly friends objected, from the robberies and murthers, for which that place was infamous; but rather deſpiſing a temporal

poral death, that he might eſcape an eternal death; nor regarding the tenderneſs of his own complexion, very ſenſible both of cold, and heat, and other injuries of the weather; nor any of the hardſhips and auſterities, that are incident to that kind of life, which he was going to undertake.

To the deſart therefore he went, taking no other clothing with him than a ſackcloth, or haircloth, with a leathern habit to wear over it, which St. Antony had given him, and a peaſant's frock. Here he made himſelf a little hut, covered with ſedges and ruſhes, to qualify the inclemency of the weather; which ſerved him from the ſixteenth to the twentieth year of his age: and then he built him a cell, which by the account of St. Jerome, who had ſeen it, was but four foot wide, and five foot high, (ſo that he could not ſtand upright in it) and in length but a little longer than his body; ſo that it ſeemed rather a tomb for a dead corpſe, than a dwelling for a living man. His diet here was anſwerable to his lodging: for his whole food for the firſt years was but fifteen dry figs in the day, and that not till after ſun-ſet: afterwards from the twenty-firſt year of his age to the twenty-ſeventh, he took only about eight or ten ounces of lentiles, ſteeped in cold water; or a little dry bread, with ſalt and water: then for three or four years more, he lived upon nothing but the wild herbs, or roots of the ſhrubs of the wilderneſs: from the thirty-firſt year of his age till the thirty-fifth, he confined himſelf to ſix ounces of barley bread *per* day, and ſome pot-herbs without oil; which rule he continued to obſerve, to the ſixty-third year of his age, only that in this latter time, he allowed himſelf a little oil with his herbs, but taſted nothing elſe, either of fruit, or of pulſe, or of any other kind of food. From that time, as he now ſuppoſed, that by courſe of nature he could not have long to live, inſtead of relenting in his auſterities, he redoubled them; ſo

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that from the ſixty fourth year of his age, till his death, that is, till he was eighty years old, he totally abſtained from bread, and took nothing at all in the four and twenty hours, but a kind of a meſs made up of meal and herbs, which ſerved him both for meat and drink; and this in ſo ſmall a quantity, that his whole daily ſuſtenance did not weigh above five ounces. Such was his auſterity, as to his food, throughout all the different parts of his life: in all which he ever obſerved this conſtant rule, neither to eat, nor to drink, till after ſunſet, how weak ſoever his health might be; no not even on the greateſt ſolemnities.

Hilarion had no ſooner entered upon this courſe of life, in that vaſt and frightful deſart, where no man before had ventured to dwell; imitating there the great model he had ſeen in his maſter Antony; and like him, applying himſelf continually to his God by prayer: when the devil, not bearing to ſee himſelf thus troden under foot by a young boy, began to aſſault him in a moſt violent manner with temptations of the fleſh, filling his whole mind with impure imaginations, and inciting him, by ſenſual allurements, to carnal pleaſures, of which before he had no notion. The chaſt youth perfectly abhorred himſelf, when he found all theſe abominable motions of luſt in his body and mind: he beat his breaſt, as if he meant by this outward violence to force away thoſe lewd ſuggeſtions: he condemned himſelf to longer, and more rigorous faſts, and harder labour, ſaying to himſelf: 'Thou little jack-aſs, I will teach thee to 'kick: thou ſhalt have no corn; but only ſtraw: I 'will bring thee down with hunger and thirſt: I will 'lay a heavy burthen upon thee. I will make thee 'work both in the heats, and in the colds, that thou 'mayſt think of thy meat, and not of wanton plea-'ſures.' And as he ſaid, ſo he did; faſting ſometimes for three or four days together, and then taking nothing for his meal but a little juice of herbs, and

and a few figs; praying and ſinging pſalms very often; and working at the ſame time, either in digging, or in making baſkets, till by theſe exerciſes he had reduced his body to mere ſkin and bones. Wherefore the enemy not prevailing this way, began to be troubleſome to him, with phantaſtic apparitions and other temptations. One night he was on a ſudden ſurpriſed with hearing the crying as it were of children, the bleating of ſheep, the bellowing of oxen, the lamentations of women, the roaring of lions, and the confuſed noiſe of an army of barbarians, with ſtrange and frightful voices: which he underſtanding to be nothing but diabolical illuſions, armed himſelf againſt them with the ſign of the croſs, and a lively faith, and caſt himſelf down upon the ground, to be better able to encounter this proud enemy, in this humble poſture. Then looking forward, it being a clear moon light night, he perceived, as it were a coach, drawn on by furious horſes, coming violently towards him: at this ſight he called upon the name of Jeſus, and ſuddenly the whole phantaſtic ſcene ſunk down into the earth, before his eyes: upon which he ſung forth the praiſes of his deliverer. At many other times, both by day and night, this unwearied enemy ſought divers ways to moleſt him; either by repreſenting to him naked figures, to excite him to concupiſcence; or by ſeeking to interrupt his devotion, or diſtract him in his prayers, by a variety of either comical or tragical ſcenes: but none of theſe, or any other of his attempts were capable of ſhaking the reſolution of the ſervant of God, or hindring him from his perpetual application to the love and ſervice of his maker. One day, as he was praying, with his head fixed on the ground, he happened to be diſtracted with ſome other thoughts: when behold the watchful enemy, taking advantage of this diſtraction, jumped upon his back, as if he would ride upon him; and whipping and ſpur-

ſpurring him, cried out to him 'ſo ho! ſo ho! come 'gallop: what art thou aſleep? Ha ha! thou art 'faint: come ſhall I give thee ſome provender?' But this like the reſt of his vain efforts, only ſerved to make the Saint more vigilant and fervent.

When he was about eighteen years old, the robbers that frequented that deſart, took it in their heads to make him a viſit; either expecting to find ſomething in his hut, to take away, or looking upon it, as a flight, that a ſingle boy ſhould venture to live alone in their dominions, and not be afraid of them. They began therefore their ſearch after him in the evening, and continued it till the ſunriſing, without being able to light upon his lodging: but in the day, they met with him, and aſked him, as it were, in jeſt, 'what he would do if the robbers 'ſhould come to him? O, ſaid he, he that has no-'thing to loſe feaſs no robbers. But, ſaid they, they 'may kill thee. True, ſaid he, but I dont fear 'death; and therefore I dont fear them, becauſe I 'am prepared to die.' They were amazed at his conſtancy and faith, and acknowledged to him, how they had ſought him all the night, and how they had been blinded, ſo that they could not find him: and ſo much were they affected with his words, that they promiſed to amend their lives.

Hilarion had ſpent two and twenty years in the wilderneſs, in perfect ſolitude, converſing only with God and his Angels; and only known to the world, by the fame of his ſanctity, (which was ſpread over all Paleſtine) when a certain woman of the city of Eleutheropolis, who had lived fifteen years in the ſtate of wedlock, without bearing a child, finding herſelf deſpiſed by her huſband, by reaſon of her barrenneſs, ventured to break in upon his ſolitude; and coming unexpectedly upon him, caſt her ſelf upon her knees before him, ſaying: 'Pardon my 'boldneſs: excuſe my diſtreſs: why do you turn

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'away your eyes from me? Why do you flee from 'your petitioner? Do not look at me as a woman; 'but as one in diſtreſs. Remember that a woman 'brought fourth our Saviour. They that are well 'ſtand not in need of a phyſician; but they that are 'ill.' At theſe words he ſtood ſtill; and having learnt of the woman (which was the firſt he had ſeen ſince his retiring into the deſart) the cauſe of her coming, and of her grief; he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and bid her be of good heart; and ſo ſent her away; weeping for her. And behold within a twelve month ſhe returned to viſit him, bringing with her a ſon. This was his firſt miracle, which was followed by a greater: when Ariſteneta the wife of Elpidius a Chriſtian nobleman (who was afterwards advanced to one of the chiefeſt poſts in the empire) returning from Egypt, where ſhe had been, with her huſband and her three ſons, to ſee St. Antony, was ſtopped at Gaza by the illneſs of her children: who were all three, by a ſemitertian fever, brought ſo low, that they were deſpaired of by the phyſicians. The diſconſolate mother hearing of the ſanctity of Hilarion, whoſe wilderneſs was not far off from Gaza, went in haſte to viſit him, accompanied with ſome of her ſervants, and thus addreſſed herſelf to him: 'I beg of thee for God's ſake; for 'the ſake of Jeſus our moſt merciful God; through 'his croſs and his blood; that thou come and reſtore 'to me my three ſons; that the name of the Lord 'our Saviour may be glorified in that pagan city: 'and that his ſervant may come into Gaza, and Mar'nas (the idol which they worſhip there) may fall 'to the ground.' The man of God excuſed himſelf, alledging that he never went out of his cell not ſo much as into any village, much leſs into any city: but ſhe caſting herſelf down upon the ground, ceaſed not to importune him with many tears; often crying out: 'O Hilarion ſervant of God, reſtore me

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'my ſons: Antony laid his hands upon them in 'Egypt; do thou ſave their lives here in Syria:' till at length ſhe obliged him to promiſe her, that he would come to Gaza after ſunſet. As ſoon as he came to their lodgings, and ſaw them there lying in their beds in burning fevers, and void of ſenſe, he called upon our Lord Jeſus, and immediately a plentiful ſweat, as from three fountains, followed his prayer: and that ſame hour they took their meat; and knowing their mournful mother, and bleſſing God, they kiſſed the hands of the Saint.

No ſooner was this miracle publiſhed abroad but great numbers of people, both of Syria and of Egypt, began to reſort to him: and many infidels by his means were brought over to the faith of Chriſt: many alſo by his example embraced a monaſtick life; for before his time there were no monks nor monaſteries in Paleſtine or Syria; he was the father and the founder; he was the firſt teacher of the monaſtic inſtitute, in thoſe provinces. And now he began to have with him many diſciples, whom he trained up to religious perfection: and who were witneſſes of the wonderful miracles that God wrought by him. St. Jerome, as one perfectly well informed, has recorded ſeveral of the moſt remarkable, with all their circumſtances. A woman of the neigbourhood of Rhinocorura (a city on the confines of Egypt) who had been blind for ten years, was brought to the Saint to be healed: ſhe told him ſhe had ſpent her whole ſubſtance on phyſicians: you had done better, ſaid he, if you had given it to the poor, and Jeſus Chriſt the true phyſician would have healed you. She earneſtly begged that he would have pity on her: and he with ſpitting on her eyes reſtored her to her ſight. A charioteer of Gaza was alſo brought to him on his bed, ſtruck in ſuch a manner by the devil, that he could not ſtir any of his limbs, but only his tongue, with which he beſought the

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ſervant of God to heal him. The Saint told him, that if he deſired to be healed, he muſt believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and promiſe to renounce that profeſſion of his, which expoſed him to the immediate occaſion of ſin. He agreed to the conditions, and was cured; and returned home rejoicing more for the health of his ſoul, than for that of his body.

Marſitas a young man of the territory of Jeruſalem, of an extraordinary bulk and ſtrength, who was poſſeſſed by a moſt wicked ſpirit, and had done much miſchief to many, was dragged by ropes, to the cell of the ſervant of God, like a mad bull bound in chains. The brethren were afrighted at the very ſight of him: but the Saint bid the people bring him up, and let him looſe: which when they had done, he commanded him to bow down his head, and come to him. The poor man began to tremble, and bend his neck, and laying aſide all his fierceneſs, falling down, licked the feet of the man of God: and after ſeven days exorciſms was entirely delivered. Another man, named Orion, a principal citizen of Aila, a city near the Red ſea, was poſſeſſed by a whole legion of devils; and was brought in like manner, loaded with chains, to the Saint; who happened at that time to be walking with his diſciples, and interpreting to them ſome paſſages of the Scripture: when behold the poſſeſſed man broke looſe from them that held him, and running up to the man of God, whoſe back was turned towards him, lifted him up from the ground on high in his arms: at which when all that were preſent cried out, apprehending that he would do ſome miſchief to the Saint: he ſmiled and ſaid: 'Let me alone, to wreſtle with my antagoniſt:' Then putting back his hand he laid hold on the hair of Orion, and brought him before his feet; and kept him down there howling, and turning back his neck, ſo as to touch the ground with the top of his head. Then praying

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he ſaid: 'O Lord Jeſus, I am a poor wretch: do 'thou releaſe this captive: thou canſt as eaſily 'overcome many as one.' All were aſtoniſhed to hear on this occaſion many different voices from the mouth of the poſſeſſed perſon, and a confuſed outcry as of a whole people: but all this multitude of wicked ſpirits was forced out by the prayers of the humble ſervant of God. The man not long after came with his wife and children to return thanks to the Saint, and brought him large preſents, by way of gratification; which he abſolutely refuſed to accept of. And when he weeping beſought him to take at leaſt what he had brought, and to give it to the poor, he anſwered; 'thou canſt better diſtribute 'thyſelf what thou wouldſt have to be given to the 'poor: for thou frequenteſt cities, and knoweſt the 'poor: why ſhould I, who have left my own, covet 'the goods of others? Many have been impoſed 'upon by avarice, under the name of the poor. 'Don't make thyſelf uneaſy: it is for both thy ſake 'and mine, I refuſe thy preſents: for if I ſhould ac-'cept of them, I ſhould offend God, and the legion 'of devils would return to thee.'

One Italicus, a Chriſtian of Maiuma, the haven of Gaza, who bred horſes for the public races, that were to be exhibited at Gaza, came to the Saint to beg his prayers, againſt the enchantments, by which his pagan antagoniſt, one of the magiſtrates of the city, had bewitched his horſes. Hilarion, who diſliked all theſe public games, was unwilling to employ his prayer for any ſuch vain occaſion. But the other repreſenting to him, that it was not by his own choice, but by his office, he was obliged to do what he did: and that the honour of God, and of religion was here at ſtake, becauſe the men of Gaza, who for the moſt part were infidels, would take occaſion, from his being worſted, to inſult, not ſo much over him, as over the church of Chriſt; the Saint, at the requeſt of the brethren, ordered

his earthen pot, in which he uſed to drink, to be filled with water, and to be given to him. Italicus took the water, and with it ſprinkled his ſtable, his horſes, his chariot, and his drivers, in the ſight of the pagans, who made a jeſt of it: whilſt the Chriſtians, confiding in the prayers of the Saint, made no doubt of ſucceſs. Wherefore as ſoon as the ſign was given, the horſes of Italicus ſprung forth with incredible ſpeed, whilſt thoſe of his adverſary were preſently diſtanced, and could ſcarce keep ſight of them, that were gone before. Upon this a lowd cry of all the people was immediately raiſed: and even the very adverſaries cried out that *Marnas the god of Gaza was worſted by Chriſt.* This miracle gave occaſion to the converſion of many.

There was alſo in the ſame town of Maiuma, a virgin dedicated to God, whom a young man in the neighbourhood was vehemently in love with. Who after having employed, without ſucceſs, flattering ſpeeches, idle jokes and other freedoms, which too often pave the way to greater crimes; went to Memphis in Egypt, to ſeek a remedy for his wound from the prieſts of Eſculapius. They furniſhed him with certain magical ſpells, and monſtrous figures, graven upon a plate of copper, which he buried under the threſhold of the houſe where the maid dwelt: when behold immediately (in puniſhment of her having laid herſelf too open to the enemy, by not flying, as ſhe ought, or not reſiſting former freedoms) the maid run mad with love; tearing off her head-cloaths, whirling about her hair, gnaſhing with her teeth, and perpetually calling upon the name of the youngman. Her parents therefore took her to St. Hilarion: when preſently it appeared how the caſe ſtood with her: for the devil began to howl within her, and to cry out: 'I was forced in hither: I 'was brought from Memphis againſt my will: 'there I ſucceeded well, in deluding men with dreams.

But

'But, Oh what torments thou makeſt me ſuffer here! 'Thou compelleſt me to go out: and behold I am 'bound faſt, and kept in by the thread, and the 'plate, that lies under the threſhold. I can not go 'out, till the young man, who keeps me here, lets me 'go.' 'Thou art very ſtrong indeed, ſaid the Saint, 'if thou art held by a thread, and a plate. But tell 'me, how didſt thou dare to enter into a maid, de-'dicated to God? It was, ſaid he, to preſerve her 'virginity. What? Thou preſerve her virginity, 'ſaid the Saint, who art the mortal enemy of chaſ-'tity. Why didſt thou not rather enter into him 'that ſent thee! O, ſaid the devil there was no oc-'caſion for my entring into him, who was already 'poſſeſſed, by my comrade, the demon of wanton 'love.' The Saint would hear no more, nor ſend for the young man, nor order the things mentioned to be taken away; to ſhew the little regard, that is to be had to the devils ſpeeches or ſigns: but preſently delivered the maid from her wicked gueſt; and ſent her away perfectly cured; after ſeverely reprehending her for admitting of thoſe liberties, which had given the devil the power to enter into her.

It would be endleſs to recount all the other miracles, that God wrought by this Saint: which rendered his name illuſtrious, even in the remoteſt provinces. St. Antony himſelf, hearing of his life and converſation, wrote to him, and gladly received letters from him: and when any diſeaſed came to him, for their cure, from any part of Syria; he blamed them for giving themſelves the trouble to come ſo far; ſince you have, ſaid he, in thoſe parts my ſon Hilarion. His bright example attracted great numbers to the ſervice of God; ſo that now there were innumerable monaſteries, or cells of religious, throughout Paleſtine; and all looked upon him as their father, and reſorted to him for their direction. He exhorted them all to attend to their ſpi-

ritual progreſs: ever inculcating to them, 'that the 'figure of this world paſſeth away; and that, that 'only is true life, which is purchaſed, by parting 'with the pleaſures and affections of this life.' Once a year he viſited all their monaſteries, for their inſtruction and edification: and ſuch was his diligence, and charity on theſe occaſions, that he would not paſs by the cell of any one of the leaſt, or meaneſt of the brethren: inſomuch that he went as far as the deſart of Kadeſh, on purpoſe to viſit one ſingle monk, who had a cell there. In this journey, he came, accompanied with a great number of his diſciples, into the city of Eluſa, in the confines of the Saracens, on a feſtival day, in which the people were all aſſembled into the temple of Venus; worſhipped there by the Saracens, by reaſon of the ſtar that bears her name. Now the people no ſooner heard that Hilarion was paſſing through the town (of whoſe ſanctity and miracles they had been informed by fame; the more becauſe he had alſo delivered ſeveral of their nation from evil ſpirits) but all of them, men, women and children, run out in crowds to meet him, and to beg his bleſſing. The Saint received them all with great tenderneſs, and humility; and begged of them that they would worſhip the living God, rather than ſtocks and ſtones: ſhedding at the ſame time many tears, and looking up to heaven; and promiſing, if they would believe in Chriſt, that he would often come to ſee them. And ſo wonderful a grace accompanied the words and prayer of the man of God, that they would not ſuffer him to leave their town, till he had marked out for them a place for the building of a church, and their very prieſt had received the ſign of the croſs of Chriſt, in order to his baptiſm.

Another year, when the Saint made his viſitation a little before the time of the vintage, he came with all his company to the monaſtery of one of the brethren,

thren, who was noted for being niggardly and miſerable. This man had a vineyard; and apprehending leſt the multitude of the monks, that accompanied the Saint ſhould eat up his grapes, he had ſet men to keep them off with ſtones and clods, and flings; and would not ſo much as let them taſte of them. The ſervant of God ſmiled at the treatment they met with; but took no notice of it to the niggard: but went on the next day to another monaſtery; where he and all his company were received by a monk, whoſe name was Sabas: who invited them all (it being the Lord's-day) to go, and feaſt themſelves in his vineyard. The Saint ordered that they ſhould firſt take the food of their ſouls, by applying themſelves to their religious exerciſes of prayer, and of ſinging pſalms, and paying their duty to God: and then after giving his bleſſing to the vineyard, he ſent in the whole multitude of his diſciples to take their corporal refection. The bleſſing of the man of God was followed with ſo miraculous an effect, that whereas the vineyard before was not thought capable of yielding more than a hundred gallons of wine, it yielded that year three hundred. Whilſt the vineyard of the niggard yielded much leſs than uſual; and the little that it yielded turned into vinegar; a circumſtance, which the man of God had foretold. He could not endure in religious men any thing that looked like covetouſneſs, or too much affection to any of thoſe things, that paſs away with this ſhort-lived world: and he had a gift from God, that he could diſcover, who were addicted to this, or to any other vice, by the ſtench that proceeded from their bodies, or their garments.

And now the Saint, ſeeing that his hermitage was turned into a great monaſtery; and that the wilderneſs about him was continually crowded with the people that reſorted thither, bringing to him their diſeaſed, or ſuch as were poſſeſſed with unclean ſpirits; and

that not only the common ſort of people, from all the neighbouring provinces, but alſo the gentry, and ladies of the firſt rank, the clerks and the monks, the prieſts and the biſhops, were daily viſiting him, and interrupting his devotions: he regretted very much the loſs of his former ſolitude; and was perpetually lamenting and weeping, that now, as he ſaid, he was returned back into the world: that he apprehended leſt he ſhould have his reward in this life; becauſe all Paleſtine and the neighbouring provinces took him to be ſome body, &c. nor did he ceaſe mourning and bewailing himſelf, till he took a fixed reſolution to quit his monaſtery, and to retire into ſome place, where he might not be known, and might more freely enjoy his God, without the interruption of ſo many viſits. In the mean time, whilſt he was meditating upon his flight, the lady Ariſteneta (whoſe three ſons he had cured) came to ſee him; acquainting him alſo with her deſign of going into Egypt, to make a ſecond viſit to St. Antony. He told her, with tears in his eyes, that he could have wiſhed to have taken the ſame journey, if he were not kept priſoner in his monaſtery; but that it was now too late to find Antony alive: for, ſaid he, two days ago, the world was deprived of ſo great a father. She believed him, and did not proceed in her journey, and, behold, after ſome days the news was brought from Egypt of his death. When it was known abroad, that the man of God was upon the point of leaving Paleſtine, the whole province took the alarm; and no fewer than ten thouſand people, of all degrees and conditions, were gathered together, in order to ſtop and detain him. But his reſolution was not to be altered: and as he had learnt by revelation the havock that the infidels of Gaza were about to make in his monaſtery, and all that neighbourhood, under the reign of Julian the Apoſtate, he gave them broad hints of this his foreknowledge:

knowledge: ſaying that he could not call in queſtion the truth of what God had ſaid; nor could he endure to ſee the churches deſtroyed, the altars of Chriſt troden under foot, and his children maſſacred. In ſhort, he aſſured them, he would neither eat nor drink, till they let him go. And thus, after he had faſted ſeven days, they were contented at laſt to ſuffer him to depart, accompanied with about forty of his monks. With theſe he made the beſt of his way to Peluſium (now called Damietta) in Egypt; and after viſiting the holy ſolitaries, who lived in the neighbouring deſarts, he waited upon Dracontius and Philo, two illuſtrious confeſſors of Chriſt, of the number of thoſe catholic prelates, who had been baniſhed from their ſees, by the fury of the Arians, under the emperour Conſtantius. After theſe viſits, he haſtened, to keep the anniverſary day of the happy deceaſe of St. Antony, in the place where he died: and being conducted by the deacon Baiſanes, upon dromedaries, three days journey, thro' that vaſt and dreadful wilderneſs, he arrived at length at the mountain of the Saint. Here he found his two diſciples, who ſhewed him all the places, where their maſter had been accuſtomed to ſing pſalms, to pray, to work, to ſit down, after being wearied with his labour; as alſo the garden he had made, the trees he had planted, the inſtrument with which he had dug the earth, his private cells, to which he often retired, towards the top of the mountain, *&c.* and they agreeably entertained him, with divers particulars of the acts of the latter part of St. Antony's life. Hilarion was much moved to devotion with the ſeeing and hearing of all this; and after watching in prayer the whole night of the anniverſary of the Saint, he returned the way that he came, through that diſmal wilderneſs to the neighbourhood of the town called Aphroditon. Here in an adjoining deſart, with two of his diſciples, whom he kept with him, he led a life of ſo much

abſtinence, abſtraction and ſilence, that he ſeemed to himſelf never to have before begun to ſerve Chriſt in earneſt, in compariſon with the fervour he now found in himſelf.

He had been about two years in this wilderneſs, when the fame of his ſanctity brought the people of all the neighbouring country to him, to beg his prayers for rain. For from the time of the death of St. Antony, no rain had fallen upon their land, for the ſpace of three whole years: ſo that being afflicted with a great famine, they reſorted to him, whom they conſidered as the ſucceſſor of St. Antony, for a redreſs of their miſery. He was moved to pity, by the ſight of their diſtreſs, and lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, to pray for them, and his prayer was immediately followed with plentiful rains. And as theſe rains, whilſt they brought fertility to the earth, in falling on that dry hot ſand, had alſo produced an incredible multitude of venomous reptils and inſects, with which innumerable perſons were ſtruck; they were forced to have again recourſe to the Saint, who gave them ſome oil, which he had bleſſed, with which they were all cured. But now finding himſelf after theſe miracles, greatly honoured in this place, he would ſtay no longer there, but departed, in order to go and hide himſelf in the deſart of Oaſis. In his way he paſſed through Alexandria; and as he made it his rule, never to lodge in any city, he went on, to a place in the neighbourhood, called Bruchium, where there was a monaſtery of ſervants of God. From hence, when night drew on, he haſtened away, telling the brethren, who were greatly afflicted at his ſudden departure, that they ſhould ſoon know the reaſon of it. Accordingly, on the next day, their monaſtery was ſearched by the Gazites, accompanied with officers and ſergeants, ſent from the governor of Alexandria to apprehend Hilarion; of whoſe arrival there they had received intelligence.

For

For the infidels of Gaza, who bore a mortal hatred to the Saint, as ſoon as Julian came to the empire, deſtroyed his monaſtery, and obtained an edict from the tyrant, that both he, and his diſciple Heſychius, ſhould be ſought for, and put to death, where-ever they were found. Of this the Saint had a knowledge by prophetic light, and thereupon withdrew himſelf, ſo that theſe infidels, who had thought themſelves now ſure of getting him into their hands; finding that he was gone, went away, ſaying to one another, that now they were ſure he was a magician, and had a foreknowledge of things to come.

He had not been a year in the wilderneſs of Oaſis, before he found that fame had followed him thither alſo: and therefore now not hoping to be able to lie concealed upon the continent, he took a reſolution to ſeek out a place where he might hide himſelf, in ſome of the iſlands of the Mediterranean. In order to this he took ſhipping, with one only diſciple at Paretonium, a haven on the coaſt of Lybia, in a veſſel bound for Sicily: hoping that henceforward no one ſhould know him, or be troubleſome to him. When, behold, in the midſt of the voyage the ſon of the maſter of the ſhip, or rather the devil by his mouth, cried out: 'Hilarion thou ſervant of God, 'let me alone, at leaſt till we come to land, what is 'the meaning that even at ſea, thou art ſtill perſe-'cuting us.' The Saint would have diſguiſed the grace, which God had given him, fearing leſt the ſailors and paſſengers ſhould publiſh his fame, when they came to land; and therefore mildly replied: 'If my God permits thee to ſtay; ſtay if thou wilt. 'But if he caſts thee out, what haſt thou to do to 'complain of me, who am but a poor beggar and a 'ſinful man.' However, upon the ſolemn promiſe of the father, and of all the reſt, that they would not diſcover him, he caſt the devil out of the boy. When they arrived at Pachynum, (now Capo Paſ-

ſaro)

ſaro) he would have paid for the paſſage of himſelf and his companion, by giving the captain the book of the goſpels, which was all his wealth; but he ſeeing their poverty, would not receive it. Wherefore the Saint leaving the-ſea coaſt, withdrew himſelf into a little kind of a wilderneſs, about twenty miles within the land, and there fixed his abode: living upon what little he could get, by making up faggots, which his companion carried to a neighbouring village, bringing from thence in exchange, what they ſtood in need of for their food.

But the Saint could not long lie concealed here. For ſoon after his arrival, a man poſſeſſed with an evil ſpirit being under the exorciſms of the church, at St. Peters in Rome, the devil cried out by his mouth: 'Hilarion the ſervant of Chriſt is ſome days 'ſince come into Sicily, where no man knows him, 'and he thinks himſelf ſecret: but I will go and 'diſcover him.' This man therefore taking ſome of his ſervants with him, and going a ſhip board, ſailed immediately into Sicily, and after coming to ſhore, being conducted by the devil, he went ſtrait to the hut of the ſervant of God, and there caſt himſelf down at his feet: upon which he was preſently cured. This being noiſed abroad, great numbers reſorted to him, who laboured under various diſeaſes, to ſeek of him their corporal cure; whilſt a multitude alſo of devout and religious people applied to him for their ſpiritual profit. Amongſt the reſt he cured upon the ſpot one of the principal men of the iſland, who was ſwelled up with a dropſy; ſo that on the ſame day he returned home in perfect health. This man would have made him conſiderable preſents: which the Saint abſolutely refuſed, alledging that precept of our Saviour Matt. x. 8. *freely have you received, freely give.* And this in general he obſerved, in all the other innumerable miracles which he wrought, whether in Sicily, or elſewhere, that he never would receive

receive any thing, no not ſo much as a morſel of bread, from any one of thoſe upon whom he had wrought thoſe miracles.

And now his beloved diſciple Heſychius, after having ſought after him in vain in many different regions, came to Sicily, upon the report he had heard at Modon in Greece, from a Jewiſh pedlar, lately come from thence, that a Chriſtian prophet had appeared in Sicily, who wrought all kind of wonders and miracles. He had no ſooner found his maſter, but he underſtood, that he wanted to be gone from Sicily, into ſome ſtrange country, where he might be utterly unknown. Wherefore in compliance with his deſire, he conveyed him away by ſhip to the coaſt of Dalmatia; where for a little while, he led a ſolitary life, not far from the city of Epidaurus, now called Raguſa. But neither here could he lie concealed: his miracles every where betraying him. There was at that time, in the neighbourhood of Epidaurus, a monſtrous ſerpent, of that kind which they call *boas*; which did great miſchief, in deſtroying both men and cattle. The Saint, to put a ſtop to this calamity, ordered the country people to heap up a pile of wood; and after making his prayer to Chriſt, he went, and called the ſerpent out of his den, and commanded him to go up on the pile of wood, and then ſetting fire to it, he burnt the monſtrous beaſt in the ſight of all the people. This miracle was followed by a greater: For about this ſame time happened that great earthquake, ſo noted in hiſtory (in the ſecond year of the reign of Valentinian the firſt) the like of which, ſays Ammianus a co-temporary hiſtorian, l. xxvi. neither true hiſtory, nor even fables have ever given an account of. On this occaſion the ſwelling ſeas in many places broke in, and overflowed the land, in ſuch a manner, as to threaten the earth with a ſecond deluge: and in ſome places they run ſo high, as to carry the ſhips along

along with them, and leave them hanging on the cliffs. The Epidaurians ſeeing the danger they were in, of their city being deſtroyed, as many others were at this time, had recourſe to Hilarion; and oppoſed him to the mountains of water, that were juſt upon the point of overwhelming them. He made three croſſes on the ſand, and lifted up his arms againſt the ſwelling waves: and though they raged and foamed, and roſe up to an incredible height; they were not able to advance, but by degrees turned back again and ſubſided. This wonder, ſays St. Jerome, who was then a young boy in that ſame province, both the city of Epidaurus, and all that country recounts to this day; and the mothers teach it to their children, in order to tranſmit the memory of it to poſterity.

The applauſe that followed theſe miracles would not ſuffer the humble ſervant of Chriſt to ſtay any longer in Dalmatia: but taking boat privately by night, he fled away, and within two day found a ſhip going to Cyprus, on which he embarked. In this voyage his ſhip was purſued by pirates in two light veſſels, and there appeared no means of eſcapeing them. When all the ſhip's crew being in the utmoſt conſternation; the Saint turning to his diſciples ſaid, why are you afraid, O ye of little faith? And when the pirates were now come within a ſtone's caſt of the Ship, he ſtood on the foredeck, and ſtretching out his hand to them, he ſaid: '*You have come far enough.*' And behold immediately their veſſels fell back; and the more they tugged and rowed, in order to puſh forward towards their hoped for prey, the more ſwiftly they were carried away from it. The Saint landed at Paphos, a noted city of Cyprus; and choſe himſelf a dwelling-place, about two miles from thence: being now wonderfully pleaſed, that he had found reſt for a little time at leaſt in this ſolitude. But ſcarce twenty days were paſſed,

paſſed, when in different parts of the iſland, the devils publiſhed his arrival, by the mouths of them that were poſſeſſed: and many of theſe poor people, both men and women, haſtened to him, and were delivered. Here he remained about two years; but meditating all the while upon ſome more private retiring place. In the mean time he ſent Heſychius into Paleſtine, to ſalute the brethren there, and to viſit the aſhes of his monaſtery: and upon his return he propoſed to him, that they ſhould ſail into Egypt; and go up a great way into the country, to ſome place inhabited only by pagans. But Heſychius oppoſed this; and after a long ſearch, found him out a place in the iſland, about twelve miles off from the ſea, amongſt mountains and woods, that were hardly paſſable; which proved quite to his mind. In this ſolitude, to which there was no acceſs, in ſeveral places, but by creeping on hands and knees, they found ſprings of water on the ſides of the hills, and a little garden within, and ſeveral fruit-trees, of which however, the Saint would never eat; and near to the garden, the ruins of an ancient temple, from whence, as both he and his diſciples related, were often heard, both night and day, great noiſes like the voices of a whole army of devils. In this place the man of God abode, for the laſt five years of his mortal life, ſeldom viſited by any one but Heſychius; becauſe of the difficulty there was to come at his dwelling; as alſo becauſe the people were perſwaded that the neighbourhood was haunted with a multitude of hobgoblins. However ſome there were that ventured to come to him, for the cure of their maladies; their neceſſity overcoming all the difficulties; eſpecially after it was known, that he had cured upon the ſpot the baily of the place, of a palſy, which had taken away the uſe of all his limbs, by ſtretching out his hand to him, and lifting him up with theſe words:

words: *In the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt riſe up and walk.*

And now the time was come, which was to put an end to all the labours of his mortal pilgrimage, and to unite him eternally to his God: when he being now eighty years old, was taken with his laſt illneſs, Heſychius was abſent; to whom nevertheleſs by will he bequeathed all he had, *viz.* his book of the goſpel, his ſack-cloth, cowl, and habit. Many religious men from Paphos came to attend him in his ſickneſs; who had heard of his having ſaid, that he was now going to our Lord: and with them a holy woman named Conſtantia, whoſe daughter and ſon-in-law he had delivered from death, by anointing them with oil. And now he was drawing near his end, when in the very agony of death, he diſtinctly ſpoke theſe words: 'Go forth my ſoul: what art thou afraid 'of? Go forth, why art thou at a ſtand? Thou haſt 'almoſt ſeventy years ſerved Chriſt, and art thou 'afraid to die?' And with theſe words he gave up the ghoſt. He was immediately buried, as he had deſired, in the ſame place; where the devout lady Conſtantia, frequently paſſed whole nights in prayer at his ſepulchre, ſpeaking with him as if he were alive, and deſiring the aſſiſtance of his prayers. His diſciple Heſychius, after ten months, privately conveyed his body away to Paleſtine; where it was ſolemnly interred in his own monaſtery: at which time it was found entirely incorrupt, and ſending forth a moſt fragrant odour. And many great miracles were daily wrought, even to the time when St. Jerome publiſhed this life, as well at his ſepulchre in Paleſtine, as at the place where he was firſt buried in Cyprus.

ST. MALCHUS.

Abridged from St. Jerome.

WHILST St. Jerome in his younger days made ſome ſtay at Maronia, a village of Syria, about thirty miles diſtant from Antioch, he learnt that there dwelt in that neighbourhood a religious man, now advanced in years, whoſe name was Malchus; and near him a decrepite old woman; both of them eminent ſervants of God; conſtant in the church, and wholly addicted to the exercices of religion. Of theſe the neighbours publiſhed wonderful things; and extolled to the ſkies their ſanctity; which gave occaſion to St. Jerome, in order to his own edification, to viſit that holy man, and to learn from his own mouth the particulars of his hiſtory; which afterwards he publiſhed to the world, in a ſmall book, of which the following is an abſtract.

Malchus was a native of the territory of Niſibis, a city of Meſopotamia, upon the confines of the Roman and Perſian empires. As he was the only child of his parents, they looked upon him as the heir and ſupport of their family, and therefore, when he was grown up, they preſſed him to marry. He ſhewed himſelf quite averſe to this ſtate of life, declaring to them his deſire of entring into religion, and of wholly dedicating himſelf to God. And as they ceaſed not ſtill to importune him, both with flatteries and threats, to part with the treaſure of his virginal purity, which he valued above all the poſſeſſions of the world; in order to rid himſelf of their importunities, and to ſecure his treaſure, he took a reſolution to withdraw himſelf for good and all from houſe and home, parents and country. Accordingly taking a little matter with him for his journey, he

he travelled weſtward; till at length he arrived at the deſart of Chalcis in Syria. He found here ſome ſervants of God, leading a monaſtical life; and he put himſelf under their direction; following the ſame inſtitute as they did; living by the labour of his hands, and reſtraining the rebellions of the fleſh by rigorous faſtings. This courſe of life, which he had happily begun, he continued for many years: till the common enemy, envying the progreſs he made in all virtue, ſuggeſted to him, under ſpecious pretexts, to leave the monaſtery, and to return to his own country; to ſee if his mother were yet alive (for he had heard of his fathers death) and if ſhe were, to comfort her in her widowhood; and then after her deceaſe, to ſell the eſtate; to diſtribute part of the money to the poor, to employ another part in building a monaſtery, and to reſerve what remained for his own uſes; a deſign which he afterwards lamented, as a grievous tranſgreſſion and infidelity to his religious engagements.

His abbot was no ſooner informed of his purpoſes, but he remonſtrated to him, in the ſtrongeſt terms, that the whole was a temptation of the devil; who by ſuch plauſible pretences as theſe had oftentimes impoſed upon religious men, and drawn them back again into the world; alledging alſo divers examples from the Scriptures, of the wicked wiles and impoſtures of this old ſerpent. And when he ſaw that his remonſtrances were not hearkened to, he even caſt himſelf down upon his knees, and earneſtly entreated his diſciple not to abandon him; not to fling himſelf away, and not to look back after ſetting his hand to the plow. But all was in vain: Malchus imagined that his ſuperior in ſeeking to detain him, had an eye to his own comfort and ſatisfaction, more than to his advantage: and therefore he would not be diverted from his deſign. When he ſet out upon his journey, his abbot followed him out of the monaſtery,

monaſtery, bewailing him, as if he had been following his corpſe to the grave; and at his laſt parting told him plainly that the ſheep, which had left the fold, muſt look for nothing but to fall immediately a prey to the wolves.

In his journey, he was to go from Beroea to Edeſſa, by a road, which borders upon a vaſt wilderneſs, much infeſted by parties of the Saracens, or Arabians, who robbed, or carried off all they met with. This obliged the travellers, who went that way, to go in great companies for their mutual defence: and ſo it happened, at this time, that there were no fewer in company with Malchus, than about threeſcore and ten perſons, young and old, men and women. But this precaution could not ſecure the fugitive, who was running away from his Lord, from being overtaken by him; and from meeting with captivity and ſlavery, inſtead of the poſſeſſions to which he imagined himſelf returning. For behold on a ſudden, a party of armed Saracens, ſome on horſeback, others upon camels, ruſhed upon them, and made them an eaſy prey; and then by lot divided their captives amongſt them. It was Malchus's lot to fall into the hands of the ſame maſter, with a married woman, one of the company, whoſe huſband fell to the lot of another. And both he, and the reſt of the priſoners, now ſlaves, being ſet upon camels, were carried for many days through an immenſe wilderneſs, living in the mean time upon meat half raw, and camels milk; till having paſſed over a great river, they came into the heart of the country. Here Malchus and his fellow captive were brought in, and preſented to their maſter's wife, and obliged, according to the manner of the nation, to proſtrate themſelves to do reverence to their new miſtreſs and to her children. And now inſtead of his monaſtic habit, or any other clothing, Malchus is obliged to go naked, as well by his con-

dition of a ſlave, as by the violent heat of the ſun, beating on thoſe Arabian ſands, which would not ſuffer him to wear any other covering than what modeſty indiſpenſably required. His office was to tend his maſters ſheep in the wilderneſs: in which it was his comfort, that he was generally alone, ſeldom ſeeing either his maſter, or any of his fellow-ſervants. He pleaſed himſelf alſo with the thought that in his way of life, he reſembled ſome of the ancient Saints, who had in like manner fed ſheep in the wilderneſs. In the mean time, his whole diet was new cheeſe and milk: and his whole employment continual prayer, and ſinging of the pſalms, which he had learnt by heart in the monaſtery. He was now delighted with his captivity: and he gave thanks to God, for the wonderful diſpoſitions of his merciful judgments, in bringing him to find the monk again in the land of his ſlavery, whom he was going to loſe forever in his own country.

The devil, who could not endure to ſee the great advantages our captive made of his preſent condition, by the help of his ſolitude, recollection, and continual prayer, contrived after ſome time a dangerous ſtratagem, for the robbing him at once both of his chaſtity, and of all his other virtues; which he ſought to bring about in this manner. The Saracen, who found that his flock encreaſed in the hands of Malchus, and that he ſerved him honeſtly and faithfully, took it in his head (no doubt by the ſuggeſtion of this enemy) to reward him, as it were, and to fix him in his ſervice, by giving him for a wife, that ſame married woman, who was taken captive with him. This he propoſed to him, as a kindneſs and a favour, which he was deſirous to do him. And when Malchus replied, that this could not be, becauſe he was a Chriſtian, and therefore could not by the law of his God, marry a woman, whoſe huſband was yet alive: the barbarian in a rage drew his ſword, and

and would have preſently killed him upon the ſpot, if he had not made haſte to take his fellow captive by the arm; which his maſter took for a token of his conſent to the marriage. When night was come, they went together, both of them with a heavy heart, to the ruinous cave, which ſerved Malchus for lodging; though neither of them knew the diſpoſitions of the other. And here Malchus caſting himſelf upon the ground, grievouſly lamented his wretched caſe; that after having in his younger days left all his worldly pretenſions, together with his country, his parents, and his eſtate, purely to preſerve his virginity, he ſhould in a more advanced age, loſe it after all, and that in ſo illegal, and wicked a manner: withal accuſing himſelf of his ſins, eſpecially of his crime, in leaving his monaſtery, to return to his own country; to which he imputed his being now caught in this labyrinth, out of which he knew not how to extricate himſelf, but by death: and this he was ſtrongly inclined to chooſe, as the only means, as he thought, to preſerve his virtue. Here his fellow captive, perceiving the great trouble and agitation of mind which he lay under, and hearing him talk of making himſelf *a martyr of chaſtity*, caſt herſelf at his feet, and begged of him for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, not to think of doing himſelf any harm: that for her part, ſhe abhorred the propoſed marriage as much as he, and would rather chooſe to die, than conſent to any unchaſtity: but why might not they live together, as brother and ſiſter, in perfect purity; whilſt their maſter and miſtreſs took them for man and wife? Theſe words calmed the ſoul of Malchus, and made him eſteem and admire the virtue of the woman, and love her the more; but according to God, and with a holy friendſhip, that was cemented together with heavenly charity.

Purſuant to this propoſal, they lived a long time together in perfect chaſtity of mind and body; and

were loved by their maſter and miſtreſs; who had not the leaſt ſuſpicion, either of their not being married, or of any danger of their making their eſcape: ſo that Malchus was uſed to be ſometimes abſent with his flock, for a whole month together, at a great diſtance from his maſter's houſe, in the wide wilderneſs. Here one day, as he was ſitting all alone, he began to conſider the great advantages for a ſpiritual life, that are found in well ordered religious communities; remembring in particular the helps and directions he had received from the good abbot, his ghoſtly father, and regretting his leaving him: when behold, in the midſt of his meditation, he perceives at a little diſtance, a hillock of ants (a creature propoſed to us by the Wiſe-man as a pattern of induſtry and wiſdom) and is pleaſed to ſee that order and harmony, which they obſerved in their labours, that mutual help which they gave to each other, and how they run to the aſſiſtance of ſuch as fell under their burthens. This ſeemed to him a lively repreſentation of a regular community; and joined to his foregoing conſiderations, made him begin to be weary of his captivity, and to long to return to his abbot, and his monaſtery. When he came home at night, the woman perceived him to be penſive and melancholly; and having learnt the reaſon of it, perſwaded him to go off; offering withal to accompany him. He concluded upon ſo doing; and having watched a proper opportunity, he killed two large goats of his flock, and made veſſels of their ſkins; and prepared part of the meat, to take along with them for their journey. On the next evening they ſet out, making the beſt of their way to the river, which was about ten miles off; which they croſſed, by the help of the veſſels they had made of the ſkins of the goats. In croſſing the river, they loſt ſome part of the meat, they had taken with them; ſo that what remained was ſcarce enough to ſupport them for

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three days: and as for drink, they here took their fill of water, not knowing when they ſhould meet with any more.

They made what haſte they could through the ſandy deſarts; looking back from time to time, with fear and trembling, to ſee if any one were purſuing after them: but they travelled moſtly by night, as well to avoid the meeting with any of the Saracon rovers, as by reaſon of the exceſſive heats. And now they had been three days upon their journey, when looking behind them, they ſaw at a diſtance two men riding on camels, and haſtening towards them. They concluded it was their maſter, who had found out what way they were gone, by their tracks in the ſands; and now they expected nothing but certain death. There was at hand a den or cave, that reached a great way under ground, to which they run for ſhelter. But fearing the ſerpents and other venomous creatures, that uſually fly to ſuch places as theſe, from the heat of the ſun, they would not venture to penetrate to the further end, leſt in flying from death in one ſhape, they ſhould meet it in another. Wherefore finding within, near the entrance of the den, a hole on their left hand, they truſted themſelves to it: and behold their maſter, with one of their fellow-ſervants, tracing them by their footſteps, quickly came up to the place. The maſter ſent the ſervant in, to draw them out of the den: he ſtood without, holding the camels, and waiting for them, with his drawn ſword. The ſervant paſſed the hole, where they lay concealed; not being able to ſee, as being juſt then come out of the light; and going forward he made a great noiſe, crying aloud. 'Come out ye 'villains, and receive your wages: come out, your 'maſter calls for you: Come out, and die.' Malchus and his companion ſaw him paſs by them, and looking after him, perceived a lioneſs (rouſed by the noiſe) flying at him, and ſtrangling him; and then

drawing his bloody body further into the den. The maſter, knowing nothing of what had happened, finding that the ſervant did not come out, ſuppoſed that they, being two, might make reſiſtance againſt one. He came therefore in a great rage, to the entrance of the cave, with his ſword in his hand, and raving at the cowardice of his ſervant, began to enter in: but before he had paſſed the lurking hole, where Malchus lay, he was ſuddenly ſeized by the beaſt, before their eyes, and ſerved in the ſame manner as his ſervant had been. Thus by an extraordinary providence were theſe ſervants of God delivered from the hands of men, that ſought their life: but they were ſtill in fear, leſt they ſhould meet with a no leſs cruel death from the furious beaſt, that was ſo near them. In this fear, they kept themſelves cloſe, without the leaſt motion, or noiſe, having no other defenſe, or dependance, but the providence of God, and a good conſcience, in point of chaſtity, which is reſpected even by lions. But it was not long before the lioneſs, finding herſelf diſcovered, and diſturbed in her den, taking up her whelp (for ſhe had but one) with her teeth, carried it out, in order to go and ſeek for another lodging; and ſo left them the whole cave to themſelves. However the fear of meeting with the beaſt, kept them cloſe priſoners till the evening: and then they ventured out, and found the two camels (who were of the kind which for their great ſwiftneſs are called dromedaries) and with them freſh proviſions, of which they had great need: and thus after refreſhing themſelves with food, they mounted upon the camels, and continued their journey through the deſarts, and on the tenth day arrived at the Roman camp, on the confines of the empire. The commanding officer, after having heard their hiſtory, ſent them to Sabinianus the governour of Meſopotamia, who gave them the price of their camels, and ſo diſmiſſed them.

And

And now Malchus would have returned to his good father, the abbot of his monaſtery, in the deſart of Chalcis; but being informed that he was gone to ſleep in the Lord; he turned his courſe towards Maronia, and there aſſociated himſelf with the monks of that place: and as to his companion he committed her to the care of the nuns that were there: ever *loving her as if ſhe had been his ſiſter*, as he told St. Jerome, *yet never truſting himſelf to her, as a ſiſter*, or expoſing himſelf to danger by any familiarity with her. As St. Jerome concludes his narration here, we cannot pretend to add any further particulars of the acts of this ſervant of God: only that he continued to the end the ſaintly life he had begun; and crowned it with a happy death: ſo that he has deſerved to have his name recorded amongſt the Saints in the Roman martyrology, October xxi.

ST. PACHOMIUS and ST. PALEMON.

Abridged from the Life of St. Pachomius by an ancient writer, who had his informations from the companions and disciples of the Saint.

ST. Pachomius was born in Thebais, or the higher Egypt, about the year 292, of infidel parents; who carried him, when yet a child, to the temples of their idols, to make him partaker of their impious sacrifices: but, as a presage of what he was to be one day, when they gave him to taste a little of the wine of the devils libations, or drink offerings, he presently cast it up again: and when upon another solemn occasion, he had accompanied them to celebrate the festival of an idol, that was worshipped upon the bank of the Nile, the devil was restrained, by his presence, from giving his answers and deluding the people with his usual tricks, till by the mouth of the priest, he had ordered Pachomius to be sent away, as an enemy of the gods. Yet all this while he knew nothing at all of the Christian religion, but otherwise led a very moral life; and was always modest, temperate and chast.

When he was twenty years old, Constantine being now emperour, he was, with many others of his countrymen, empressed for the service, upon occasion of a war just then breaking out. The young recruits were put on ship board, in order to go down the Nile, and so to be carried to the army. In their way they came to a certain city, the inhabitants of which were remarkably officious, in giving all the comfort and assistance, that was in their power, to these young men, who were kept close confined by their officers, and were in great distress. Pachomius enquired, who these men were that shewed so

ſo much humanity, and benevolence to the afflicted and diſtreſſed? And he was anſwered, that they were Chriſtians, a ſet of men, who made it their buſineſs to do good to all men, and eſpecially to ſtrangers in diſtreſs. He further enquired, what was meant by the name of Chriſtians, and what were their tenets? And they told him, they were godly and religious people, who believed in Jeſus Chriſt, the only Son of God; and exerciſed themſelves in all virtues and works of charity, in expectation of an eternal reward from God in another life. Pachomius was touched with this account; and being viſited with the divine grace, withdrew himſelf into a corner, and lifting up his hands and heart to heaven, he called upon the great God, who made heaven and earth, to enlighten his ſoul with the knowledge of the true and perfect rule of life, which he would have him to follow: and promiſed if he would deliver him from his preſent bondage, that he would yield himſelf up to his divine ſervice, for all the days of his life, and quit all worldly hopes, to adhere to him. He had not been long in the troops, before the emperour, having obtained the victory over his enemies, and put an end to the war, ordered the new raiſed ſoldiers to be diſcharged. And then, having recovered his wiſhed for liberty, Pachomius returned to his own country; and preſently put himſelf in the number of the catechumens, that is, of thoſe that were under inſtruction in order to baptiſm. He was baptized, not long after, in the church of the town of Chinoboſcium; and on the following night was animated with a heavenly viſion, and ſtrongly moved to conſecrate himſelf entirely to divine love.

In order to follow this call, he repaired forthwith to a holy anchoret, who lived all alone in a neighbouring deſart, whoſe name was Palemon; with a deſire of putting himſef under his conduct and direction, and of living with him. This ſervant of God,

God, who led a very auſtere life, at firſt refuſed to receive him; remonſtrating to him, that ſeveral others had in like manner pretended to put themſelves under his diſcipline, but were quickly weary of his way of life. Pachomius deſired that he would try him at leaſt: for that he truſted in God, he would enable him to go through with all that he ſhould require of him. My ſon, ſaid Palemon, the way of life, that I follow, is not of the eaſieſt. I eat nothing but bread and ſalt, and wholly refrain from oil and wine. I watch one half of the night; employing that time in ſolemn prayer, and in meditating on the word of God: and ſometimes I paſs the whole night without ſleep. Pachomius replied, that he hoped the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with the help of his prayers, would give him the neceſſary courage and patience, to embrace, and to go through all this rigour, even to the end of his life. Palemon ſeeing the faith and reſolution of the young man, was content to receive him, and to give him the monaſtick habit: and Pachomius on his part from the very beginning, embraced with ſo much ardour the exerciſes of a religious life, and advanced with ſuch large ſteps, day by day, in the way of all virtue, and perfection, as to give an unſpeakable ſatisfaction and joy to his maſter: who was continually giving thanks to Chriſt, for the wonders of his grace, which he diſcovered in his diſciple. In the mean time, they lived together in one cell, and followed together the ſame practices of abſtinence and prayer; and exerciſed themſelves together in manual labours, that they might ſupport themſelves, without being burthenſome to any one, and might have wherewith to entertain and relieve their indigent brethren. After the labours of the day, they watched and prayed together, for a good part of the night: and if upon theſe occaſions Palemon obſerved that Pachomius was in danger of falling aſleep, he led him out of the cell, and employed him

him in carrying loads of ſand from one place to another, in order to overcome his drowſineſs: telling him that he muſt not by any means ſuffer himſelf to relent in watching and praying, if he hoped to perſevere to the end in his holy undertaking. Beſides theſe exercices, Pachomius in a more particular manner, applied himſelf to the cultivating and purifying his interiour. In order to this, in reading the divine ſcriptures, and committing them to his memory, (which was a part of his daily occupation;) he paused and made a deep meditation, upon every one of the heavenly precepts, which he found there; letting them ſink into his ſoul, and ſtudying to reduce them all to practice: but his favourite virtues, in which he particularly laboured to excel, were a profound humility, an unwearied patience, and an unbounded charity, and love, both for his God, and for his neighbour.

When Eaſter was come, Palemon bid Pachomius prepare them a dinner, for that great feſtival. He readily obeyed, and in conſideration of the feaſt, had mingled together a little oil and ſalt, to be eaten with the wild herbs which he had gathered. But when after they had prayed together, Palemon came to table, and ſaw the ſallad prepared for him; inſtead of eating of it, he wept bitterly; 'ſaying, my Lord was 'crucified: and ſhall I indulge myſelf in eating oil?' Neither would he at any rate be induced, to take any other food, but his bread and ſalt as uſual: bleſſing it with the ſign of the croſs before the meal; and returning humble thank to our Lord after the meal.

One day, when Palemon and Pachomius were watching together, and had kindled a fire in their cell; another religious man coming to them, deſired admittance. They courteouſly received the ſtranger: who after ſome diſcourſe, 'propoſed to 'them that if they had faith, they ſhould ſhew it, by 'ſtanding with their bare feet over thoſe burning 'coals,

'coals, (as he himſelf was ready to do) whilſt they 'repeated at leiſure the Lords prayer.' The ſervants of God were ſhockt at this arrogance of their gueſt: and Palemon begged of him to deſiſt from ſuch a mad propoſal. But he, inſtead of hearkening to him, being pufft up with ſelf-conceit and preſumption, went and ſtood upon the coals, and by the help of the enemy, God ſo permitting, in puniſhment of his pride, was not burnt at all. The next morning, when he departed, he added to his pride the inſolence of inſulting, as it were, over the two Saints, and reproaching them with their want of faith. But it was not long before this pride of his was moſt dreadfully puniſhed: for the devil ſeeing him, by reaſon of his ſelf-conceit, already ſtript of divine grace, and in a condition to be made an eaſy prey to luſt; came one day to his cell, in the ſhape of a beautiful woman, pretending to be in diſtreſs; and being admitted, enkindled in his heart the fire of concupiſcence. The unhappy man readily yielded to theſe wicked ſuggeſtions, and offering to put them in execution, was ſo cruelly handled by this evil ſpirit, as to be left extended upon the floor, without ſpeech or ſenſe. However after ſome time he came to himſelf; and as ſoon as he was able, went to the cell of St. Palemon, telling what had happened to him; acknowledging that he had drawn all this evil upon himſelf by his pride, and begging their prayers, that the devil might not tear him in pieces, or otherwiſe deſtroy him. The Saints lamented his caſe, and wept for him: but the enemy, to whom he had made himſelf a ſlave, would not ſuffer him to ſtay with them: for all on a ſudden he jumped out of the cell; and after running about the wilderneſs, like a madman; he went to the neighbouring city of Panopolis, and there flung himſelf into the furnace of the hot baths; and periſhed in

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the flames: a dreadful example of the ſad conſequences of ſelf-conceit and pride!

Pachomius, from ſeeing and hearing theſe things took occaſion of being ſtill more humble, more mortified, and more fervent in prayer: and as he had a great love for ſolitude, he often withdrew himſelf from his cell into lonely places, and there ſpent a long time in prayer: earneſtly begging of the divine Majeſty, to deliver him from all the deceits and ſnares of the wicked one. There was alſo in the neighbourhood a wild place full of thorns, to which he often went, to get wood for their uſe; and upon theſe occaſions, he walked bare-foot among the thorns, pleaſing himſelf with the pricks and wounds that he received from them, by the meditation of the piercing of the feet of our Saviour upon the croſs. One day, going to a greater diſtance than ordinary from his cell, he came to a place called Tabenna, at that time altogether uninhabited: where, when he had, according to his cuſtom, remained a long time in prayer, he had a revelation, that he was to build a monaſtery there; and that many ſhould reſort to him, and put themſelves under his conduct; for whoſe inſtruction and direction he ſhould receive a rule from heaven: a ſketch of which was here preſented him by an Angel. When he returned back to St. Palemon, he acquainted him with this revelation, and induced him to go along with him to Tabenna: where they built a ſmall cell, and for ſome time continued together in their accuſtomed exerciſes: till Palemon ſeeing the great grace of God, that was given to Pachomius, going back again left him ſole poſſeſſor of this new cell; upon condition, that as long as they lived, they ſhould frequently viſit each other, for their mutual comfort, and ſpiritual aſſiſtance.

And now the time was drawing near, which was to crown the labours of St. Palemon, with an eternal reward

reward in the land of the living. As a preparation for this, he was ſeized with a grievous and moſt painful illneſs: which the brethren, who came to viſit him, attributed to the auſterities of his penitential life; and therefore prevailed upon him, to admit of ſome little comforts, in point of eating and drinking, in conſideration of his weakneſs and age. But he quickly returned again to his former diet, alledging that the change had ſerved for nothing but to increaſe his pains: and that if the martyrs had bravely ſuffered ſo many cruel torments, for the love of Chriſt, and purchaſed thereby a happy eternity; it would be a ſhame for him to forfeit the eternal reward, prepared for patient ſuffering, by cowardly yielding to his light and momentary pains. After this he continued for about a month, ſuffering with great courage and conſtancy: and then his ſoul, ſufficiently purified in this furnace of tribulation, took her happy flight, in the company of Angels, to the heavenly manſions. His name is recorded amongſt the Saints, in the Roman martyrology, on the eleventh of January.

After Pachomius had buried his holy father, and was returned to his cell at Tabenna, God was pleaſed to ſend him for his companion, his own brother: who having heard of his wonderful life; came to viſit him, (which was the firſt time the Saint had ſeen any of his own relations ſince his converſion) and propoſed to live with him. Pachomius received him with great joy: and found in his brother all the diſpoſitions he could deſire in a perfect religious man. So that they continued together, meditating on the law of God, day and night; and with all the affection of their ſouls, ever tending towards him; totally diſengaged from the care and the love of any of the things of the earth. For though they laboured with their hands, for their daily food, they never laid up any thing for to-morrow; but whatſoever they earned

earned over and above the neceſſary ſuſtenance of the day, they gave it to the poor. And now Pachomius added to his former auſterities that of humbling his ſoul and body, with wearing hair-cloth: and for fifteen years, notwithſtanding his hard labours, his long watchings, and his continual faſtings, he never allowed himſelf to lie down at night, to take his reſt; but what ſleep he admitted of, he took ſitting in the midſt of his cell, without having any thing at his back, to lean againſt, for his eaſe.

In the mean time, the Saint was again admoniſhed from heaven, concerning the religious congregation, that he was to inſtitute, and the rules he was to give them: and therefore he began to enlarge the place of their habitation, and to build many more cells, for the reception of thoſe, whom he expected in God's good time, to come and join him in the ſervice of ſo great a maſter. His brother, whoſe ſpirit drew him rather to the life of an anchoret, in a more perfect ſolitude, after ſome time blamed his proceedings in this point of building; and being the elder brother, took upon him to bid him deſiſt from this uſeleſs labour. The Saint could not help being troubled with this oppoſition; yet bore it with meekneſs and humility, and returned not one word of a reply. But the next night, proſtrating himſelf in prayer all alone in the new building, he ſpent the whole night in lamenting his miſery; and imploring the divine mercy; for having ſuffered in his ſoul the motions of impatience, and reſentment on this occaſion: and in begging the grace of God, to keep him, and to protect him from ſin for the future; and ſo powerfully to aſſiſt him, for the time he had yet to come, that he might acquire the perfect maſtery of all his paſſions, and ſerve him in all perfection, all the days of his life. And ſo many were the tears he ſhed that night, and ſo great the fervour of his prayer, the weather alſo being violently hot,

hot, that what with his weeping, and what with his ſweat, the place, on which he lay proſtrate, was as wet, as if water had been caſt upon it. At other times, in his devotions by night, he uſed to excite himſelf to watching, and fervour in prayer, by ſtretching out his arms, and keeping his body immoveable, as if he were faſtened to the croſs, and remaining for ſeveral hours in this painful poſture. As to the reſt, he behaved himſelf always with that humility, meekneſs, and condeſcenſion to his brother, that they lived together in perfect harmony and peace, till God was pleaſed to take the brother to himſelf. Pachomius took care for his burial; and ſpent the whole night, in ſinging pſalms and hymns over his body, and recommending his ſoul to God.

And now Pachomius, as if all was nothing that he had hitherto done, *forgetting* with the apoſtle *the things that were behind, ſtretched forth himſelf to the things that were before*, by a new fervour, in the ſtudy and practice of all religious perfection: having ſtill before his eyes, the congregation which he was to eſtabliſh in that place. This drew upon him the greater envy and malice of the wicked enemy; who ceaſed not to ply him with temptations, in every kind; and oftentimes with phantaſtical apparitions: ſeeking, either to puff him up with pride and vain-glory, by the honours he pretended to pay him; or to allure him to luſt, by ſetting before him the figures of impudent women, with their bare boſoms; or to interrupt and diſtract him in his devotions, by a variety of illuſions and ludicrous ſcenes: ſometimes alſo aſſaulting him with open violence; and even laying upon him many grievous blows and ſtripes. But the Saint armed with a lively faith, and a ſtrong confidence in Jeſus Chriſt, whom he called to his aſſiſtance by fervent prayer, ſtill came off with victory, in all theſe conflicts; and even with a great increaſe of virtue, to the confuſion of all the powers

of

of hell. So that now he was enabled, by the gift of God, to tread under his feet ſerpents and ſcorpions; and the very crocodiles obeyed him. In the mean while he grudged himſelf even the ſhort time he was obliged to allow to neceſſary ſleep: becauſe he would have gladly ſpent it all in prayer: and he earneſtly prayed to the Lord, that he might be able to live without ſleep; and to be wholly intent, night and day, on his divine love: which in ſome meaſure, as far as his mortal condition could bear, was granted to him. Now the great ſubject of his prayer, both night and day, was that the will of God might be ever accompliſhed in all things.

After this he was again viſited by an Angel, who told him it was the will of God, that he ſhould not only ſerve him himſelf, with all purity and perfection, but alſo ſhould aſſemble together a great multitude of religious men, and train them up, and dedicate them to his divine ſervice; according to that method and rule, which had been ſhewn him before. So that now he began to receive all ſuch as came to him, that were deſirous to fly from the contagion of the world, and by penance to preſent themſelves as humble ſuitors to the mercies of God. And after having made them paſs thro' a long trial or noviceſhip, he admitted them to the monaſtic profeſſion: ever inculcating to them the ſtrict obligation of their inſtitute; as well in point of flying from all the allurements of the world; as of always diligently exerciſing themſelves in the ways of virtue and holineſs. Adding that a monk, according to the directions of the goſpel, in the firſt place, ought to renounce the world in general: in the next place all diſorderly affections of fleſh and blood, to his neareſt kindred and worldly friends: and in the laſt place (which was the hardeſt of all) ought to renounce alſo and deny himſelf; and to take up his croſs, and follow Chriſt. As the number of thoſe that reſorted to him,

encreaſed every day, he diſtributed them into different claſſes and monaſteries, appointing to them all their regular exercices, and different employments, according to their abilities and diſpoſitions; and making himſelf all to all: not only by a general ſolicitude for their ſpiritual progreſs; but alſo by being ever ready to ſerve, even the leaſt of them, in the meaneſt offices: ſo as to make himſelf on every occaſion, their cook, their gardiner, their porter, and eſpecially their infirmarian; by the tender care he always ſhewed to the ſick, by attending on them night and day.

He delivered to all his monks, the rules he had received from heaven; appointing for them a very moderate food, a mean habit, and no more ſleep than neceſſity required. He laboured to have them all well grounded in *humility*, as the neceſſary foundation of all virtue; without which the ſpiritual building is ſure to fall to the ground. To exclude all ambition, or deſire of preferment, and ſuperiority, he would not even allow his monks to be promoted to the prieſtly dignity, chooſing that they ſhould rather remain in the humble condition of laicks: and therefore till God ſent him ſome prieſts, who deſired to be admitted to his congregation, (for ſuch as theſe he did not refuſe, but received with great reſpect) he was forced to have recourſe to ſome neighbouring clergymen, deſiring them to come, and ſay maſs in his monaſteries, and to adminiſter the holy communion to his religious. But above all things he recommended to his children, a ready and perfect *obedience*, as the very ſoul of religion; and the ſhorteſt way to all religious perfection; by diveſting them of their own will, and making them ſecurely find, and faithfully follow, in all things, the bleſſed will of God.

He had the bowels of a tender parent for all his children, but a more particular affection and compaſſion

paſſion, for the aged and ſick; as alſo for young boys; ſerving them himſelf, and exerciſing the works of mercy in their regard, with his own hands, and taking a more eſpecial care for their comfort and inſtruction. Nothing could equal the reſpect he had for the clergy in general, and more particularly for the biſhops of God's church; or the zeal he had for the purity of the Catholic faith: which made him have a horrour for the Arians and other hereticks, as enemies of God's truth. And as at that time the books of Origen (who had unhappily blended the errors of the Platonick philoſophers with the Chriſtian doctrine) were very much handed about, among the Egyptian monks, to the great prejudice of their ſouls; Pachomius declared an open war againſt theſe dangerous books; and prohibited to all his monks the reading of them.

He had likewiſe a great zeal, for the ſalvation of the ſouls; not only of his own religious, but alſo of all others, whom he ſaw in want of ſpiritual aſſiſtance. He obſerved there were in that country, many of the meaner ſort of people, employed in the care of the cattle, who for want of having a church at hand, to which they might reſort, lived in great ignorance, and without the uſe of the ſacraments. To remedy this evil, he applied to the biſhop of Tentyra, and procured that a church ſhould be built for them in the neighbouring village: and as it was ſome time before they were provided with clergymen; he went himſelf with his monks, on ſundays and holy-days, and read to theſe poor ignorant people, leſſons out of the divine Scriptures, proper for their inſtruction; and this in ſo edifying a manner, and with ſo ſerene and heavenly a countenance, and ſuch a ſaintly air of devotion, as made his auditory receive him, and attend to him, not as to a man, but as to an Angel ſent them from heaven. And many there were, who, upon this occaſion, were brought over by his inſtruc-

tions, from infidelity and errour to the chriſtian faith. The more becauſe he on his part employed in their behalf, not only the words of exhortation and doctrine, but alſo the more effectual arms of fervent prayer for their converſion, accompanied with many ſighs and tears.

At this time the great St. Athanaſius was biſhop of Alexandria: who in viſiting the churches of Egypt (which were all under his juriſdiction) came alſo to Tabenna, the place where our Saint had eſtabliſhed his monaſteries. Pachomius venerated this holy patriarch, as the great pillar of the church of God; and reſpected him much more for his ſanctity, than for his dignity; and therefore cauſed all his monks to go out to meet him, ſinging pſalms and hymns; and to receive him with great reverence and joy: yet ſo that he himſelf would not appear at the head of them; nor any way diſtinguiſh himſelf amongſt them; but hid himſelf in the crowd; to avoid his being particularly taken notice of by that great prelate; and, as he feared, promoted againſt his will to the prieſtly dignity; at the recommendation of the biſhop of Tentyra his dioceſan, who very much deſired to have him prieſt.

Whilſt Pachomius was happily employed in conducting a great number of holy ſouls, in the ways of life, and directing them to perfection, both by word and example; a ſiſter of his, hearing the fame of his ſanctity, came one day to his monaſtery, deſiring to ſee him. The Saint, who admitted no woman into his monaſtery, ſent her word by the porter, that he was alive and well: and willed her to go home in peace, and not to make herſelf uneaſy, on acconnt of her not ſeeing him in this tranſitory life. But added, that if ſhe deſired to follow the like kind of life as he did, in order to find mercy with God, and to ſecure to her ſoul a happy eternity; ſhe ſhould think well of it: and if this ſhould be her fixt reſolution; he would

would give orders for the building a proper mansion for her, at a diſtance from his monaſtery: where ſhe might ſerve the Lord in all purity of ſoul and body, under regular diſcipline; and might in time engage many others, by her example, to dedicate themſelves in like manner to the love and ſervice of Chriſt, in a religious life. For as to the finding, as long as we carry about with us this body of death, any true reſt, or content, or happineſs, but in the works of godlineſs, he ſaid, was altogether impoſſible. His ſiſter hearing this, ſhed a flood of tears: and being at the ſame time touched with a ſtrong grace, determined upon the ſpot to chooſe that better part, which he had recommended to her: and as ſoon as the monaſtery was in readineſs, which he ordered to be built for her, ſhe entered into it; and there ſerved our Lord, with ſuch great perfection, as to attract many others of her ſex, to come and join with her in her holy undertaking; and to conſecrate themſelves to Chriſt, under her conduct. This was the origin of the nuns of the order of St. Pachomius: to whom the Saint gave the ſame rules as to his monks: and took the ſtricteſt care imaginable, that the one ſhould have little or no communication with the other; that ſo he might cut off all occaſions of temptation.

Amongſt the diſciples of St. Pachomius, the moſt illuſtrious imitator of his virtues, and his ſucceſſor in ſanctity, was St. Theodore, whoſe hiſtory is as follows. He was born of Chriſtian parents, very noble according to the world, and very rich in worldly goods. His father dying when he was very young, left him heir to a plentiful eſtate, under the care of a tender and affectionate mother. But he had a better father in heaven, who ſhewed his great care, and tender love for him, by an early taking away out of his heart the love of the world and its fooleries; and ſweetly inviting him, to his divine ſervice; and that in a very extraordinary man-

ner, when he was yet ſcarce twelve years old. It was upon a ſolemn occaſion of publick mirth, when a great feaſt was preparing in his houſe, (which abounded in rich furniture, and all kind of worldly wealth) that he was ſuddenly viſited with a heavenly light in his interiour, which clearly ſhewed him the nothingneſs of all theſe tranſitory things; and was accompanied with a ſtrong call to give up all, to follow Chriſt. 'Oh! what would it profit thee, 'O unhappy Theodore, ſaid he to himſelf, on this 'occaſion, if thou ſhouldſt even gain the whole 'world, and enjoy all the temporal delights the world 'can give; if thou ſhouldſt loſe by this means the 'eternal goods and immortal joys of heaven. For 'there is no pretending to paſs thy life here in theſe 'vain pleaſures and delights, and yet expect to merit 'thoſe everlaſting rewards hereafter.' With theſe ſentiments he withdrew himſelf into a private cloſet; and there proſtrating himſelf on the floor, with many ſighs and tears, he prayed thus to our Lord: 'O 'almighty God, who knoweſt all the ſecrets of hearts, 'thou knoweſt there is not any one thing in this 'world that I prefer before the love of thee. Where-'fore I implore thy mercy, that thou wouldſt direct 'me to thy holy will; enlightning my poor ſoul, 'that ſhe may never ſleep in the darkneſs of ſin, 'and of eternal death: but being redeemed by thy 'grace, may be brought to praiſe and glorify thee 'forever.' Whilſt he was praying to this effect, his mother came in, and finding him all in tears, aſked him, who had given him any trouble, or offence, that he ſhould grieve in this manner, and ſeparate himſelf at dinner-time from the company? that they had been ſeeking him every where, and were in great concern about him. He begged of her to make herſelf eaſy, and to go to her meat: but deſired withal to be excuſed from bearing her company. From this time he accuſtomed himſelf, in going to ſchool, to faſt every

every day till the evening; and frequently to eat nothing for two days: and for two whole years, whilſt he remained in the world, he totally refrained from all delicacies; contenting himſelf with the meaneſt and coarſeſt kind of food. After ſome time, he quitted all that he ſeemed to poſſeſs in the world, and entered into a monaſtery: where he had not been long before he heard of St. Pachomius, and was inſpired with a deſire of putting himſelf under his diſcipline. He followed the call, and going to Tabenna, was willingly received by the Saint; and, in a ſhort time, made a very conſiderable progreſs in all virtues, by the great fervour with which he applied himſelf to watching, faſting, prayer, and all good works.

Whilſt Theodore was climbing up the hill of Chriſtian perfection, by a conſtant attention, to pleaſe God, and to omit nothing which he conceived to be for his ſpiritual advancement: his mother having heard where he was, attempted to bring him back into the world. Wherefore having obtained letters of recommendation from ſome biſhops (to whom ſhe knew Pachomius could refuſe nothing) ſhe went to the monaſtery of the nuns, and wrote from thence to the holy abbot, deſiring that ſhe might ſee her ſon. Pachomius called for Theodore, and told him how the caſe ſtood: and that to ſatisfy his mother's deſire, and in conſideration of the holy prelates, whoſe letters ſhe had brought, he thought he might go, and ſee her. And will you aſſure me, reverend father, ſaid Theodore, that after receiving ſuch great lights, and calls from God, as I have received; and leaving both my mother, and all things elſe in the world, for the love of Chriſt; I ſhall have nothing to anſwer to our Lord at the laſt day, if I ſhould go now to ſee my mother, to gratify fleſh and blood; and give this diſedification to my brethren? Nay ſaid Pachomius, if you don't judge it

expedient for your ſoul, I don't deſire to compel you to it: for it is far more becoming a true monk, whoſe profeſſion is to renounce all the world, and himſelf too, to ſhun all manner of unprofitable and worldly viſits, and vain converſation; and to admit of no other company, but of thoſe from whoſe godly diſcourſe he may be edified in the way of God. This refuſal, however diſagreeable it might be at firſt to the mother of Theodore, turned to her great advantage, in order to the ſalvation of her ſoul. For in hopes of meeting with ſome opportunity, ſooner or later, of ſeeing her ſon, amongſt the other religious, ſhe reſolved to continue with the nuns, and to follow the ſame holy way of life. And as to Theodore, his whole life from this time was ſo perfect, and ſaint like in every regard, that after his death he was enrolled amongſt the Saints. His name occurs in the Roman martyrology on the twenty-eighth of December.

To return to St. Pachomius, as he received unſpeakable comfort and joy, by occaſion of the fervour of Theodore, and many others of his monks, whom he ſaw advancing by large ſteps in the way of religious perfection: ſo he was exceedingly afflicted, when he met with any, who under the habit of religion, had nothing of the ſpirit of religion, but lived rather according to the fleſh; not having yet put off the old man of their former worldly converſation. He ſpared no pains with ſuch as theſe: employing as well admonitions, exhortations, and corrections, as fervent prayers to God, and tears poured out in their behalf, in order to obtain for them the grace of a perfect converſion; and he did not deſiſt till they were either brought to a ſenſe of their duty, and reclaimed from their evil ways; or elſe, if they proved incorrigible, were cut off from his congregation. A young man, named Silvanus, who had been an actor upon the ſtage, leaving this ſinful profeſſion, came to put himſelf under the diſcipline of the

the Saint: and was received in his monaſtery. But whilſt he was here, he led for ſome time a very careleſs life, breaking through the rules of the congregation, and ſpending his time in entertaining himſelf and others, with his former ridiculous buffooneries, to the great ſcandal of his brethren: who deſired the holy abbot to diſmiſs him. The man of God, who was very unwilling to ſend back again into the world any of his children; employed, beſides his charitable remonſtrances and exhortations, which were without effect, his more potent arms of continual prayer, ſighs and tears, for his poor ſoul: and then, taking him aſide, repreſented to him, in ſo ſtrong and powerful a manner, the truths of eternity, the dreadful judgments that threaten impenitent ſinners; with the reſt of the motives, that are moſt proper to excite in ſouls both the fear and love of God; that the grace of God opening the heart of Silvanus, he was immediately touched, with ſo lively a ſenſe of his ſins, and ſo great a compunction for them, that he not only entirely refrained, for the time to come, from his former faults; and began to lead a new life, of great edification to the reſt of his brethren: but alſo in every place, and in every occupation, he was always weeping and lamenting for his paſt crimes. Inſomuch that he could not refrain from ſobbing and mourning, even when he was taking his meat with the other religious. And when they deſired him, not to afflict himſelf to ſuch an exceſs as this; which was even troubleſome to them: but rather to reſtrain theſe outward tokens of grief, which were no way neceſſary, even to the moſt perfect compunction; the true ſeat of which was within in the heart: he told them he would gladly obey them; and that he made all the efforts he could to reſiſt, and refrain from theſe tears: but that he found a certain flame burning in his breaſt, that would not ſuffer him to be quiet. But, ſaid they, what ſubject, or occaſion is there for all theſe floods

floods of tears? 'Ah! ſaid he, how can I help weeping, 'when I ſee ſo many holy brethren, the duſt of whoſe 'feet I ought to venerate, ſo charitable as to take 'notice of me? When I ſee a wretch, that is come from 'the play-houſe, quite laden with ſins, receive ſo many 'good offices? Alas! I have reaſon to fear, leſt the 'earth ſhould open under my feet, and ſwallow me 'down, as it did Dathan and Abiron; in puniſhment 'of my having profaned all that was ſacred (after ſo 'clear a knowledge and experience of divine grace,) 'by leading this ſlothful and wicked life. And do 'you wonder at my tears? Oh! I ought in all reaſon 'to labour, to expiate my innumerable ſins, with ever 'flowing fountains of tears: and if I could even pour 'forth this wretched ſoul of mine in mourning, it 'would be all too little to puniſh my crimes.' With theſe ſentiments of humility and contrition, he made ſo great a progreſs in virtue and ſanctity, as to be admired by the holy abbot himſelf; who propoſed him to the reſt of his monks, as a ſingular pattern of humility: and aſſured them, that neither Theodore himſelf, nor any of the reſt of them, whoſe lives had been the moſt innocent, and who ſeemed, by their good works, to have already troden Satan under their feet; were near ſo much out of danger of this enemy's riſing up againſt them, and overthrowing them by pride, as Silvanus was: whoſe perpetual contrition and humility kept the devil at ſo great a diſtance, that he could have no manner of hold of him. This glorious penitent, after eight years ſpent in thus continually offering to God the ſacrifice of a contrite and humble heart, put a happy end to his penitential courſe of life, by dying the death of the Saints. And St. Pachomius gave teſtimony, that at the hour of his death, a multitude of heavenly ſpirits took his ſoul along with them, with great joy, and preſented it as a choice ſacrifice to Chriſt our Lord.

There

There was another alſo of the religious, whoſe ſanctity was much eſteemed by Pachomius; whom he likewiſe propoſed as an extraordinary pattern of virtue and perfection, to the reſt of his monks. His name was Zacheus: who after he had for a long time ſerved the Lord, with great diligence and fervour in a religious ſtate, fell ill of the jaundice, which held him till his death. On this occaſion, he had a cell appointed him, in which he lived ſeparated from the reſt of the religious: yet he omitted none of the regular exercices of the community, but was always with the reſt at all the hours of prayer. He never allowed himſelf in his illneſs any ſleep in the day; and every night before he laid himſelf down, he employed himſelf for ſome time in meditating on ſome paſſages of the holy Scriptures; and then ſigning his whole body with the ſign of the croſs, and glorifying God, he took his ſhort repoſe. About midnight he roſe again, and continued praiſing God, till the time of the morning-prayers. His whole food was only bread and ſalt: and he ſpent the whole time, that was vacant from other duties, in working with his hands, in making mats. In handling and twiſting the palm-leaves, which he made uſe of in his work, his hands were very much galled and wounded; oftentimes to the ſhedding of blood: but he never interrupted his work for that, nor betrayed the leaſt ſign of impatience. One of the brethren ſeeing one day his hands grievouſly wounded, and all bloody by his work; entreated him to conſider his illneſs, and to ſpare himſelf: for that God, who knew what he ſuffered, and how much he was otherwiſe afflicted by his diſeaſe, would not impute it to him for ſin, or charge him with ſloth, if he did not work. And as to the community, they expected it not from him: but as they willingly exerciſed hoſpitality to the greateſt ſtrangers, and to all that were in want, they would no doubt take a much greater pleaſure in ſerving

ſerving him. Zacheus anſwered: that he could not poſſibly think of living without working. Well ſaid the other, if you are fixt in your reſolution of continuing to work; at leaſt anoint your hands with oil, to prevent the loſs of ſo much blood. Zacheus followed his advice: but inſtead of finding any eaſe, by the application of the oil, to his wounded hands; the pain encreaſed to ſuch a degree, as to become quite inſupportable. St. Pachomius came to viſit him on this occaſion; and treating him as one, that ſtood not in need of milk, but was capable of digeſting the ſtrongeſt diet; reprehended him for having ſought this aſſnagement to his pains, which God had ſent him for his profit; and not having reſigned himſelf wholly to him; but rather truſted in this viſible medicine than in the living God. Zacheus made no apology for himſelf: but meekly anſwered; 'Forgive me, reverend father, and pray to the Lord 'for me, that he may vouchſafe in his mercy to re-'mit me this ſin alſo, together with all my other ſins.' My author adds, from the teſtimony of many of the brethren, that he bewailed himſelf for a whole twelvemonth, (on this occaſion) and obſerved during that time ſo ſtrict a faſt, as to eat but once in two days, and that in a ſmall quantity. Pachomius uſed to direct to this holy man ſuch as were afflicted, or oppreſſed with ſadneſs: for he had a wonderful grace in adminiſtring comfort to all that were in trouble or affliction of mind. He continued his labours, and conflicts to the end: when in a good old age, he paſſed from temporal ſorrows to eternal joys.

St. Pachomius was invited by Varus, the holy biſhop of Panopolis, to come into his dioceſe, and to eſtabliſh there ſome monaſteries of his inſtitute. In his way he viſited divers religious houſes, of the number of thoſe that were under his direction. In coming to one of theſe houſes, he met with the brethren carrying out the corps of one of the religious, accom-

accompanied by his worldly friends and relations, in order to be buried with a ſolemn office, in an honorable manner. At the ſight of the Saint, they all ſtood ſtill, deſiring him to pray, both for themſelves and the deceaſed brother. He made his prayer, and underſtanding in ſpirit the wretched ſtate of that ſoul; (for the man had led a very careleſs and indolent life) he forbid them to proceed in their pſalms; ordered them to take off the fine garments, with which they had clad him, and to bury him without any ſolemnity, or tokens of honour: which, as the holy abbot aſſured them, would be rather a diſſervice, than a ſervice to his unhappy ſoul. Which proceeding of the Saint was deſigned for a warning to all his diſciples, not to rely upon wearing the habit of religion, without the life of religion. He ſtaid here two days, teaching and inſtructing his religious, and arming them againſt the deceits of Satan: when a meſſage was brought him, from the monaſtery of Chenoboſcium, that one of his religious there was near his end; who deſired to ſee him, and to have his laſt bleſſing before he died. He haſtened thither; but when he came within two or three miles of the monaſtery, he heard a heavenly melody in the air, and looking up, ſaw the ſoul of that ſervant of God carried up by Angels to heaven: who died at that inſtant of time; as the companions of the Saint, to whom he diſcovered, what he had heard and ſeen, found when they arrived at the monaſtery.

Pachomius was received with great honour by the biſhop; who gave him, and his monks, proper places for the building of their monaſteries: which, whilſt they were eſtabliſhing, ſome wicked men, by the inſtigation of Satan, pulled down in the night, what they built up in the day. The Saint preached patience to his people, on this occaſion: but God took his cauſe in hand: for one night, when theſe wretches were intent upon their wickedneſs, they were ſuddenly con

ſumed

ſumed by fire, and ſeen no more. On many other occaſions, God was pleaſed to work miracles, in favour of the faith and ſanctity of his ſervant Pachomius; of which theſe inſtances may ſuffice. A woman, that had laboured for a long time under an iſſue of blood, was ſuddenly cured, by coming behind him, and only touching his habit, when he was ſitting in the church of Tentyra, with Denys the prieſt. Many others were healed by his prayers of divers diſeaſes, and delivered from the poſſeſſion of wicked ſpirits. A man came to him one day, deſiring him to caſt the devil out of his daughter. The Saint told him, that he and his religious never ſpoke to women: but that he ſhould ſend him in any garment, that belonged to his daughter, which he would bleſs in the name of the Lord; and that he truſted in Chriſt, ſhe ſhould be reſcued from the power of the enemy. The father brought him one of her garments; which when the holy abbot had looked upon, he preſently underſtood in ſpirit the caſe of the young woman; *viz* that ſhe was guilty of ſins of impurity, by which ſhe had violated the vow of chaſtity, ſhe had made to God; and that upon this account the devil had permiſſion to take poſſeſſion of her. He returned therefore the garment to the father: telling him how the caſe ſtood; and that if he deſired his daughter ſhould be delivered from the devil, ſhe muſt firſt repent, and turn from her ſins; and promiſe to be guilty of them no more, and then ſhe ſhould find mercy. Her father took her to taſk, and at length ſhe acknowledged her guilt, with great ſigns of repentance; and promiſed, in the moſt ſolemn manner, to refrain from any ſuch like ſins for the future. Upon which the man of God gave the father ſome oil, which he had bleſſed: and by the uſe of it ſhe was preſently cured; and never ceaſed to glorify God, who had delivered her at once, both from the poſſeſſion of the devil, and from her ſinful habit.

habit. The Saint on his part was never puffed up with pride, or vain-glory, on occaſion of any of theſe miraculous cures, that God wrought by him: but continuing always in the fear of God, and in a perfect ſenſe of his own nothing, he kept his ſoul always even, ſo as neither to be elevated with good ſucceſs, nor depreſſed with evil. And if at any time God did not grant the things he petitioned for, he was perfectly reſigned to the divine will: knowing that to be the beſt, both for himſelf, and for all others, which God ordained, and ſaw to be moſt fitting.

One of the religious, who was a diligent imitator of the virtues of the holy abbot, ſtanding one day in prayer, was ſtruck in the foot by a ſcorpion: and though the torment, he ſuffered on the occaſion, was extream; and the pain, together with the poiſon, ſpred itſelf even to the heart, and threatened him with preſent death: yet he would by no means interrupt his devotions, nor ſtir from his place, till he had finiſhed his prayer. And then Pachomius prayed to our Lord for him, and he was preſently healed. On the other hand, Theodore, being afflicted with a moſt violent pain in the head, deſired the man of God to pray for his cure: but he told him, that it was far better for him, to bear his pain (which God had ſent for his profit) with perfect reſignation, patience, and humility; how long ſoever it might continue to afflict him; and to give thanks to his divine Majeſty for it, as for a great favour. For that a religious man might merit more, and pleaſe God better, by patience and conformity to the divine will in ſufferings and ſickneſs, than by the moſt rigorous abſtinence, and long continued prayers in the time of health.

And now after our Saint had eſtabliſhed his congegation upon a ſolid bottom, and aſſembled together a very great number of holy ſouls, ſerving God in great

great perfection; many of whom he had ſent before him to heaven: he himſelf was taken with his laſt illneſs, a litttle after Eaſter (anno 348). In his ſickneſs, he preſerved always a ſerene and chearful countenance: and having called together the brethren, and made an excellent exhortation to them; begging of them, to remember all the leſſons he had given; to fly from the converſation of hereticks; and to be ever vigilant in prayer, and all other exercices of virtue; he recommended to them the choice of a ſucceſſor. And after two days, arming himſelf with the ſign of the croſs, and looking with a chearful aſpect on an Angel of light, who was directed from heaven to him; he breathed out his holy ſoul, to take her flight to her heavenly country, upon the ninth of May. His name ſtands recorded amongſt the Saints, in the Roman martyrology, on the fourteenth of May; and in the menologies of the Greeks on the fifteenth: where alſo they affirm that the number of his monks, before his death, reached to one thouſand four hundred. But Palladius, (afterwards biſhop of Helenopolis) who has given an abſtract of the life of St. Pachomius, in his *Hiſtoria Lauſiaca*, chap. 38. and who had viſited in perſon the holy inhabitants of the deſarts of Egypt, ſome years after the death of this Saint, affirms that the whole number of the monks, whom S. Pachomius had under his care in all his monaſteries, amounted to ſeven thouſands: and that in his own monaſtery of Tabenna alone, there were one thouſand four hundred monks. Now all theſe maintained themſelves with the labour of their hands, without being troubleſome to any one; and at the ſame time, by their frugal way of living, were enabled alſo to exerciſe hoſpitality, and to give charity to the poor, with a liberal hand.

St. AMMON, Abbot.

From St. Athanaſius, in his life of St. Antony, chap. 32. *Ruſinus and Palladius in their hiſtory of the holy fathers of the deſarts of Egypt.*

St. Ammon or Amon, the firſt founder of the monaſteries of Nitria; and as ſome authors affirm, the firſt author of a cenobitical or conventual life; was born in Egypt, in ſome part of the third century, of parents wealthy and noble, according to the world. From a boy he embraced a ſaintly life, deſiring to ſerve God, in perfect purity both of ſoul and body; but when he was come to the age of two and twenty, he was compelled, againſt his will, by his kindred, to marry a Chriſtian virgin, of the like virtuous diſpoſitions, as the ſequel demonſtrated. For as ſoon as they were left alone on their wedding night, Ammon repreſented to his ſpouſe, how much more happy, and more pleaſing to God the ſtate of virginity was, beyond that of the uſe of matrimony; ſtrengthening what he ſaid with the authority of the holy Scriptures; and ſo powerfully exhorting her to preſerve the treaſure of her virginal purity; and inſtructing her in the manner of life ſhe ſhould lead to pleaſe Chriſt, the true ſpouſe of virgins; that ſhe willingly agreed, they ſhould live, like brother and ſiſter, in the ſame houſe, in perfect continence, lying in different beds; and only united with the bonds of the Spirit, in charity and prayer. Thus they lived together in the world, for eighteen years; Ammon dividing his time in ſuch manner, as to give a good part of it to labour, by working in his garden and balm-yard, and the reſt to his exercices of prayer and devotion; and uſually faſting till the evening. At the end of this time, their parents and friends, who had obliged them to marry, being now dead, they

agreed to live aſunder, and both of them to embrace a monaſtic life. Ammon therefore left her in poſſeſſion of the houſe; which in proceſs of time ſhe turned into a nunnery; many devout virgins reſorting to her, and putting themſelves under her direction: and he for his part, retired into the wilderneſs of mount Nitria, forty miles diſtant from Alexandria: where he built himſelf two cells; and laid the foundations of that admirable religious inſtitute, which was afterwards followed there by no fewer than five thouſand religious, dwelling in about fifty different habitations; but all meeting to their publick devotions in one large church, ſerved by eight prieſts.

As to the particulars of the acts of St. Ammon, after his retiring to mount Nitria; as none of the ancients has given us his life at large, we muſt content ourſelves with putting down here in ſhort what is related of him incidently, in the life of St. Antony. chap 32. Here we are informed by St. Athanaſius, 1ſt, that St. Ammon was united with St. Antony in the bands of a moſt holy friendſhip; and frequently viſited him: 2dly, that from his childhood, to an advanced age, he always lived the life of a Saint: 3dly, that he was greatly renowned for ſigns and wonders, and miraculous graces: and 4thly, that at the hour of his death, his ſoul was ſeen by St. Antony (who was then at the diſtance of thirteen days journey from Nitria) taking her happy flight to heaven, eſcorted thither by a multitude of heavenly ſpirits. As an inſtance of how great a favourite he was of heaven, and how great a lover of modeſty and purity; the ſame St. Athanaſius relates in the ſame place: how upon a certain occaſion, when he was obliged, with his diſciple Theodore (who was alſo a man of great ſanctity) to paſs over the river Lycus, ſwelled with ſudden rains; he deſired Theodore to go back, and keep at a diſtance, whilſt he put off his garments, that they might not ſee one another

another naked: but as he was thinking to ſtrip himſelf, he found a great repugnance to it, through modeſty and ſhame of ſeeing his own naked fleſh: when, behold, on a ſudden he was in an extaſy or trance; and found himſelf on the other ſide of the river, without knowing how he came thither. Theodore coming up was ſurpriſed to find he had been ſo expedite in paſſing the river; the more becauſe he could perceive no marks of moiſture upon his feet or garments; and he did not ceaſe to importune him, to let him know, how he got over the river, till upon his promiſe of keeping the matter ſecret, as long as Ammon ſhould live, he diſcloſed the whole to him. This Theodore is different from S. Theodore, diſciple of S. Pachomius, but has deſerved no leſs than he by his extraordinary virtues, a place amongſt the Saints: with whom his name ſtands enrolled in the Roman martyrology, January 7.

Rufinus, in his lives of the fathers, chap. 30. and *Palladius* in his *Hiſtoria Lauſiaca*, chap. 3. relate ſome other inſtances, both of the grace of miracles, and of the prophetic ſpirit of S. Ammon. When he lived retired in the wilderneſs, a youth was brought to him bound in chains, who had been bit by a mad dog, and was raging mad. His parents, who came along with him, begged of the Saint, (who by this time was renowned for miracles) that he would cure him. He told them, they aſked a thing that far exceeded his merits. But thus much, ſaid he, I will tell you: do but you reſtore to the poor widow the ox that you privately ſtole, and your ſon ſhall be healed. They were frightened, when they heard him ſpeak of the theft, which they were ſenſible he could not know but by revelation. However they made the reſtitution, which was required of them; and the young man, at the prayer of the ſervant of God, was perfectly cured.

Another time, when two men had come to viſit him in his ſolitude; finding that he ſtood in need of a large veſſel, to keep water in, for the uſe of ſuch as reſorted to him, they promiſed to bring him a capacious veſſel for that purpoſe. Now one of theſe men was the maſter of a camel; the other had only an aſs. The former, when he returned home to his village, repented of his promiſe: alledging that he would not riſk the life of his camel, by loading him with ſo heavy a burthen. Well, ſaid the other, I will not be worſe than my word; but will venture to lay upon my aſs this load, which, you ſay, would kill your camel: truſting that the merits of the man of God will make that poſſible which appears impoſſible. He did as he ſaid, and the aſs carried the veſſel with ſo much eaſe, that he did not ſeem to feel any burthen at all. When he came to the cell of the Saint, he commended the man's faith: and told him that his neighbour in the mean while had loſt his camel by death. And accordingly, when he came home, he found that his neighbour's camel, whilſt he was in his way to the Saint, had been worried by wolves.

As to the diſciples of St. Ammon, and the monks his ſucceſſors in the congregation of mount Nitria, they were for a long time after renowned for their regular diſcipline, hoſpitality, and charity; which is even cried up to the ſkies, by Rufinus and Palladius, from their own experience: as having been ſome time amongſt them. St. Jerome alſo, as we learn from his apology againſt Rufin, made a journey on purpoſe to ſee them: 'I went, ſays he, to 'Egypt, I ſurveyed the monaſteries of Nitria; and 'amongſt the choirs of the Saints, I plainly perceived 'there were ſome aſps lurking.' Which he adds, becauſe in his time the errors of Origen had crept in amongſt ſome of the religious. As to the reſt, we learn from the authors above named, that as ſoon

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as they, and their company, were come within ſight of their monaſteries, the religious, according to their cuſtom, came out to meet them, bringing with them loaves of bread, and pitchers of water, to refreſh them, after the fatigue of their journey over thoſe burning ſands: that then they conducted them to the church, ſinging pſalms; and there waſhed their feet, and wiped them with their towels: ſtriving which of them ſhould introduce them into their cells, and entertain them there; not only with all offices of humanity and charity, that were in their power, with regard to their corporal refreſhment, but alſo with excellent leſſons of ſpirituality, for the benefit of their ſouls: in which line they particularly inculcated the practice of their favourite virtues of humility and meekneſs, in which they themſelves ſingularly excelled.

For the entertainment of ſtrangers and externs, they had built a large hoſpital, near to the church, where all that came were welcome to ſtay as long as they pleaſed, altho' it were for two or three years: yet ſo that after the firſt ſeven days they were employed in ſome kind of work, as all the monks were; or at leaſt, if they were perſons of note, in reading the good books they put in their hands. They were alſo to have no converſation together, but to keep ſilence at leaſt till noon. As to the afternoon, 'about the ninth hour, one might ſtand, ſays Palla-'dius, chap. 7.) and hear in every one of the mona-'ſteries, the religious ſinging hymns and pſalms 'to Chriſt, and joining prayers with their hymns, 'in ſo ſweet a manner, that a man would be apt to 'think himſelf elevated on high, and tranſlated into 'a heavenly paradiſe'

About ten miles off Nitria, further in the wilderneſs, there was a place, called *Cellia*, from the multitude of the *cells* that were there diſperſed up and down. Here ſuch of the Nitrian monks as aſpired after a greater ſolitude and perfection, made themſelves cells,

in which they lived as anchorets, at a good diſtance from one another; never converſing together, or ſeeing one another, but when they met at church, which was twice a week: unleſs the caſe of ſickneſs, or ſome office of charity, required that any one ſhould viſit the cell of another, or break in upon his ſilence and ſolitude. In this place, charity, piety and ſanctity, was ſeen to reign in its full perfection.

St. Ammon paſſed to a better life on the fourth of October, (on which day he is commemorated in the menologies of the Greeks) about the middle of the fourth century.

ST.

ST. PAUL the Simple.

From Rufinus, chap. 31. *and Palladius*, chap. 28.

PAUL, from his innocent ſimplicity ſirnamed *the Simple*, was by his education a plain honeſt huſbandman, who had lived in the world to the age of ſixty, in a married ſtate, without blame: when, upon a certain occaſion, having taken his wife in adultery, he reſolved to leave both her and the world; and going eight days journey into the wilderneſs, he addreſſed himſelf to St. Antony, deſiring him to receive him into the number of his diſciples, and to teach him the way to ſave his ſoul. St. Antony told him he was too old to think of being a monk now; and that he could never be able to go through with the difficulties and auſterities of a monaſtick life, eſpecially in his eremitical way: but go, ſaid he, into the village, and there employ yourſelf in working for your bread, and praiſing God: and having ſaid this, he went in and ſhut his cell. Paul ſtill continued faſting and praying at the door, for three days and three nights; till Antony ſeeing his faith and perſeverance, went out to him, and told him, that the way to ſalvation was obedience; and that if he would be his diſciple, he muſt do all that he ſaid to him: which Paul readily promiſed to do: and made good his word, by complying to a tittle, with every injunction of the Saint, how difficult, or irrational ſoever it ſeemed to be. For Antony, in order to try him, impoſed upon him a variety of labours, mortifications, and humiliations, till he found him to be a man entirely humble and ſimple, and quite according to his own heart. He gave him therefore a rule of life, which he ſhould follow, and after ſome

time appointed him a cell, at the diſtance of three miles from his own: where he frequently viſited him: teaching him to ſpend in ſuch a manner his ſolitary hours, in manual labours; as that whilſt his hands were at work, his heart ſhould be in heaven. And as to his corporal ſuſtenance, he directed him never to eat or drink, till the evening; and then with ſuch moderation, as never to take his fill; eſpecially in his drink; tho' this was nothing but water.

By following theſe rules, and more particularly by a conſtant and fervent application of his ſoul to God, in mental prayer, Paul quickly arrived at a great perfection in all virtues. Amongſt which his obedience. as well as his humility, was ſingularly remarkable. One day when many religious were aſſembled with St. Antony, and were conferring about ſpiritual matters, making frequent mention of the prophets; Paul, who was one of the company, according to his ſimplicity, aſked whether the prophets lived before our Saviour's time, or ſince? St. Antony, by way of reproving his putting ſuch an abſurd queſtion, made a nod to him, ſaying: *Go, hold your peace.* Paul, who had reſolved to obey every word, that Antony ſaid to him, as if it had been an oracle from God himſelf, immediately went away to his cell; and kept there ſo ſtrict a ſilence, that he would not upon any occaſion utter ſo much as one word: till Antony, hearing of it, deſired him to ſpeak, and aſked him what was the meaning of his long ſilence? Why, ſaid he, father, it was in obedience to you: for you bid me go, and hold my peace. St. Antony took occaſion from hence to ſay to the reſt of his diſciples: 'This man condemns us all; 'for whereas we are ſo often wanting in our 'obedience to our great maſter, who ſpeaks to 'us from heaven; he always obſerves to a tittle

'every

'every word, of what kind ſoever, which he hears 'from my mouth.'

With this obedience and humility, Paul advanced daily, by large ſteps, towards God: and was rewarded by him, with ſuch admirable gifts and graces, as to work both more, and greater miracles, than St. Antony himſelf. Inſomuch that this holy abbot uſed to ſend to Paul, ſuch as he himſelf could not cure. For an inſtance of this, Palladius relates, how a young man, being brought to Antony, who was poſſeſſed by a moſt furious and obſtinate devil; he told the people, that this ſame was one of the principal devils; and that the grace of caſting out this kind of wicked ſpirits was not as yet given to him, but to the humble and ſimple Paul. He himſelf therefore conducted him to Paul: and ſaid to him, 'here caſt out the devil from this man, that 'he may go home, and glorify God.' And why don't you do it yourſelf? ſaid Paul. I have ſomething elſe to do, ſaid Antony; and ſo he went home to his cell. Paul fell to his prayers: and then, riſing up, ſaid to the devil, in his innocent way, 'Get thee gone out of the man: father Antony ſays 'thou muſt go out.' The devil called him a fooliſh old man; and told him he would not go out for him: and when he urged him a ſecond time, repeating again that Antony ſaid he muſt go out: he abuſed both him and Antony, calling them by contemptuous names; and ſtill refuſed to depart. 'If thou 'wilt not go out, ſaid Paul, I will go and tell Jeſus 'Chriſt; and it ſhall be worſe for thee.' The devil broke out into blaſphemies againſt Chriſt: and obſtinately kept his hold. The holy man therefore went out of his cell, in the broiling heat of the ſun at noonday (which in Egypt, ſays my author, is not unlike the Babylonian furnace) and ſtanding upon a rock, addreſſed his prayer to Jeſus Chriſt crucified; pro-

proteſting to him in his ſimplicity, that he would neither come down from that rock, nor either eat or drink, till he was pleaſed to hear him, and to force that devil out of the man. When, behold, whilſt he is praying, the devil roars out, 'I go, I go, I ſuffer 'violence, this is an intolerable tyranny: I am de- 'parting from the man, never, never more to re- 'turn. 'Tis Paul's humility and ſimplicity caſts me 'out: I know not whither I muſt go.' With theſe words the man was preſently delivered; and as a token of the devil's departure, a ſerpent of an unuſual length, was ſeen at the ſame time to crawl away to the Red-ſea.

Many other and greater miracles were wrought by the prayers of this Saint: but what is related of him in an ancient author, publiſhed by Roſweydus in the 7th book of the lives of the fathers, C. 23. is ſtill more admirable. *viz.* That he had received this grace from God, that he could read in the faces of the brethren, their very thoughts, and the whole ſtate of their ſouls. Thus one day, when the religious were entring into the church; he ſaw all but one of them go in, with a great ſerenity and brightneſs on their countenance; attended with their good Angels full of joy: but one of the company appeared black and gloomy; having on either ſide of him a devil, who held him with a bridle; whilſt his good Angel followed behind, at a diſtance; and appeared ſad and ſorrowful. The man of God, ſeeing this, ſpent the whole time that the brethren were at church, in weeping and lamenting for that ſoul, which he underſtood to be in the deplorable ſtate of mortal ſin. But when they came out again, looking on that ſame perſon, he found him quite changed; his countenance now was bright and beautiful; his good Angel was joyful; and the devils ſtood off at a diſtance, grieving for having loſt their prey. The

Saint

Saint ſeeing this, could not contain his joy: but broke out, with a lowd voice, into the praiſes of God; extolling the wonders of his mercy, ſhewed in behalf of poor ſinners. And having related what he had ſeen, deſired of the brother (for the glory of God, and the edification of all the reſt) to declare what change he had experienced in his interiour, which could give occaſion to that ſudden and wonderful alteration, which he had remarked in his exteriour. He did as the Saint deſired, and publickly confeſſed, that his ſoul had been indeed in a moſt wretched condition, thro' a habit of impurity: but that upon hearing that day in the church thoſe words of God, by the prophet Iſaias, Chap. 1. *Be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes, ceaſe to do perverſely; learn to do well—and then if your ſins are as ſcarlet, they ſhall be made as white as ſnow—If you be willing, and will hearken to me, you ſhall eat the good things of the land. But if you will not, and will provoke me to wrath, the ſword ſhall devour you, becauſe the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.* He was ſtrongly touched with a ſenſe of the heinouſneſs of his ſins, and with a horrour and compunction for them, joined with a great love of the infinite goodneſs and mercy of God; and a full determination to renounce his evil ways, and to dedicate himſelf henceforward in good earneſt to the love and ſervice of ſo good a God: and that this had been the employment of his thoughts, and the ſubject of his prayer, all the time he was in church. Upon this declaration of his, all that were preſent magnified the mercies of God, who ſo readily forgives the greateſt ſinners, when, like the prodigal child, they return to him, with a contrite and humble heart. This whole paſſage is recorded by my author, as an inſtance of the wonderful efficacy of perfect contrition, in the ſpeedy reconciliation it makes between the ſinner and God.

But

But it ſhews at the ſame time the wonderful efficacy alſo of the prayers and tears of our Saint, which procured for this ſinner the effectual grace of this perfect contrition.

St. Paul the Simple is regiſtred amongſt the ſaints in the Roman martyrology on the ſeventh of March.

ST.

St. MACARIUS the Elder.

From Rufinus, chap. 28. *Palladius*, chap. 19, 20. *and other ancient monuments.*

THE name of *Macarius* is very illuſtrious in the hiſtory of the primitive religious of the deſarts of Egypt. We find one of that name attending on St. Antony, in the laſt fifteen years of his mortal life, and ſuppoſed to be one of the two diſciples that buried him. But beſides him, of whom we know few other particulars, there were two others, greatly celebrated, by all antiquity, for their ſanctity, and miracles, both of them co-temporaries with, if not alſo diſciples of St. Antony; and both of them honoured with the prieſtly character: the *elder*, called by ſome authors *the Egyptian*; and the *younger*, called *the Alexandrian*, from being a native of Alexandria.

Macarius *the Elder*, or *the Egyptian*, was born in Egypt about the year 300. He retired, when he was young, into a cell near his village, and there began to ſerve God with ſuch perfection, as to be worthily eſteemed by all the neighbourhood; and promoted by his biſhop to the leſſer orders. But his humility, ſeeking to decline the office and miniſtry of a clerk, carried him to a diſtant place; where he followed without let or hindrance, his call to an anachoretical life: working in the mean time with his hands for his bread, and with his heart all the while converſing in heaven. Here a certain ſecular, of a religious diſpoſition, obſerving the ſaintly life he led, came to him, in order to aſſiſt him in ſelling his baſkets, and to miniſter to him. But as great trials, in one ſhape or another, are commonly the attendants of, or the forerunners to, the moſt eminent ſanctity, Macarius here

here met with a very ſevere one, upon the following occaſion.

In the neighbouring village, a young woman was unhappily ſeduced and corrupted by a fellow of the neighbourhood; and being found with child, by her parents and friends, and interrogated concerning the perſon, that had corrupted her; ſhe by the ſuggeſtion of the devil, ſaid it was that hermite, who paſſed for a Saint, meaning Macarius. Upon this the whole town was in an uproar: and going out, they dragged the ſervant of God out of his cell, and brought him into the village, and there hanging potts and pans about his neck, led him about thro' all the highways, publiſhing aloud to all they met: 'This hermite is 'the villain that has ſeduced our girl:' and beating him all the way in ſo unmerciful a manner, that he verily thought he ſhould have died in their hands. Nor did they deſiſt, till upon the remonſtrances of an old man, whom they met, they conſented to let him go, provided any reſponſible perſon would be a ſurety for his maintaining the girl and her child. His friend, who had followed him all the way, and been inſulted on his account, for having given teſtimony before to his ſanctity, undertook to be ſurety for him: and having delivered him out of their hands, brought him back to his cell. And now he was obliged to redouble his labours night and day, in making baſkets, to have withal not only to procure food for himſelf, but alſo to furniſh a maintenance for the unhappy woman, that had calumniated him. This heavy croſs he bore with wonderful chearfulneſs, till the time came when the young woman fell into labour, and ſuffered ſuch extraordinary pains for ſeveral days, without being able to be delivered, as brought her to a ſenſe of her crime: upon which ſhe acknowledged the wrong ſhe had done to Macarius, and declared withal who was the true father of the child. This preſently came to the

the ears of the good man, the friend of the Saint: who run with great joy to declare it to him: adding, that all the people were coming out to beg his pardon, for the wrong they had done him. Macarius hearing this, and being more afraid of honour than of humiliations and diſgrace, he would not wait for their coming, but preſently withdrew himſelf into the deſart of Scete, or Scithi, being then about thirty years of age.

This deſart, in which no man had dwelt before, was of a vaſt extent, but quite deſtitute of all commodities of life. It was hard to meet with even any water at all in thoſe burning ſands, and the little that was found there was of a very diſagreable ſmell. Hither Macarius went, by divine inſpiration, to ſeek a ſolitude, to which no way nor path conducted; and here he began to lay the foundations of that ſublime perfection, to which God afterwards raiſed him; and to which he alſo brought many others by his means; who in proceſs of time followed him into this frightful wilderneſs, and put themſelves under his diſcipline. For in a ſhort time their number grew to be conſiderable: and amongſt them were divers eminent Saints. And indeed ſuch was the general character of the ſolitaries of Scete, for the auſterity and ſanctity of their lives, that they were looked upon by all the reſt as a model of religious perfection. Macarius had been about ten years in this deſart; when the number of the brethren encreaſing, it was neceſſary that a prieſt ſhould be ordained for them, to feed them both with the word of God, and the holy ſacraments: on which occaſion the Saint was obliged to accept of the prieſtly order, and to execute its functions amongſt his religious: being already ſo far favoured by divine grace, as to have received from God a power of caſting out evil ſpirits, and of working of other great miracles, together with the ſpirit of prophecy, and a foreknowledge of things to come.

As

As an inſtance of his prophetic ſpirit, Palladius relates how he often warned his diſciple John againſt the ſpirit of covetouſneſs, telling him, that if he did not mortify that unhappy inclination of his to worldly pelf, as he laboured under the vice of Giezi, ſo he ſhould incur the puniſhment of Giezi. Which happened accordingly, when fifteen or twenty yeas after the Saint's death, appropriating to himſelf what ſhould have been given to the poor, he was ſtruck with the leproſy, in ſo terrible a manner, that there was not one ſound place in his body. The ſame author gives us alſo inſtances of his power over evil ſpirits, in caſting them out by his prayers: and of his deſtroying their magical operations; in the caſe of a woman that was bewitched in ſo ſtrange a manner, as to appear to herſelf, and to her friends, metamorphoſed into a mare; but was delivered by the Saint's pouring upon her head ſome holy water, which he had bleſſed. The Saint in ſending her home, admoniſhed her never to neglect the public worſhip of the church, nor the frequentation of the ſacraments; for that the enemy would not have had this power over her, had ſhe not for five weeks kept away from the ſacred myſteries.

Many other great miracles God wrought by his ſervant Macarius: and ſome of them of the firſt magnitude. It happened that a murder was committed in one of the places bordering upon the wilderneſs, where the man of God abode; and that an innocent man was accuſed of the murder; who run for refuge to the cell of the Saint: the people purſued after him, and having found him there, were for binding him, and carrying him away to deliver him up to juſtice. The man ſtrongly pleaded his own innocence; proteſting by all that was ſacred, that he knew nothing of the murder: but they inſiſted upon taking him away with them; alledging, that they ſhould be called to an account themſelves, if they let him go. Macarius

carius inquired, where they had buried the man that was murdered; and, went along with them to the grave. Then kneeling down, and calling upon the name of Jeſus Chriſt, he ſaid to the ſtanders by: The Lord will now ſhew, whether this man is guilty, or no. Then raiſing his voice he called the dead man by his name, and conjured him by the name of Chriſt, to tell if this was the man, that had murdered him. When behold a lowd voice was heard, coming out from the grave: that he was not the man. Upon this all that were preſent were ſtruck with great fear and aſtoniſhment, and fell down to the ground, at the feet of the man of God: deſiring him withal that he would put one queſtion more to the deceaſed, to learn from him, who it was that had killed him? No, ſaid the Saint, it is enough for me to clear the innocent: 'tis not my buſineſs to detect the guilty: who knows, but he may have the grace, if he be ſuffered to live longer, to do ſerious penance for his crime?

A certain heretick of the ſect called *Hieracites* (that had an affinity with the Manicheans) coming into the wilderneſs, endeavoured to corrupt the faith of the brethren, with his captious arguments, and learned ſophiſtry. This man at length had the boldneſs to attack the Saint alſo, upon the ſcore of his faith, in the preſence of many of the religious; and to oppoſe to the ſolidity of his reaſonings from the ſcripture, delivered with his uſual meekneſs and ſimplicity, a number of frothy words and ſophiſms, too apt to impoſe upon the weak and ignorant. Wherefore the man of God, apprehending leſt the faith of the ſtanders by ſhould be in danger, on this occaſion, propoſed that inſtead of *contending in words, which would be to no profit, but to the ſubverting of the hearers*, 2. Tim ii. they ſhould go out to the burying place of the religious, and ſhould put the cauſe upon this iſſue, that he who ſhould raiſe a dead man to

life, ſhould be acknowledged to be the teacher of God's truth; and his faith ſhould be followed. All the hearers applauded the propoſition: and the heretick conſented to it: but deſired that Macarius ſhould be the firſt to make the trial. When therefore they were come to the graves, the Saint proſtrating himſelf on the ground, employed ſome time in ſilent prayer: and then lifting up his eyes to heaven, he ſaid: 'Be pleaſed, O Lord, to ſhew which of us two 'holds the right faith, by raiſing up this dead man to life.' And with this he called by name the brother that had been laſt buried; who preſently anſwered him out of his grave: and upon opening his ſepulchre, and removing all the earth that was laid upon him, was taken out alive, and preſented to the man of God; to the great aſtoniſhment of the heretick, who immediately fled away; and never durſt ſhew his face any more in Scete.

But to leave the miracles of Macarius, and to paſs to his virtues: we find that his eminent ſanctity, for which he has been ſo juſtly admired by all ſucceeding ages, was built upon its true foundation, *viz.* the knowledge and contempt of himſelf, and a profound humility. This ſhewed itſelf, by his ever joyfully embracing humiliations, and flying from honours and applauſe. Thoſe were always the moſt welcome gueſts to him, who abuſed him, or ridiculed him: to theſe he more freely opened himſelf: whereas he was ſilent and reſerved, with regard to thoſe, who, when they came to viſit him (as many did to hear him ſpeak of the things of God) ſhewed him any particular marks of honour or eſteem. A thing ſo well known, and obſerved by many, that at length ſuch as came to viſit him, with a deſire to hear his heavenly leſſons, would on purpoſe begin their converſation, with telling him the ridiculous, or wicked things, they had heard of him, and what he was ſaid to have been guilty of in his youth: and then they were

were ſure to pleaſe him beſt. The devil himſelf once acknowledged that it was the humility of the Saint, and not any of his extraordinary auſterities, that kept him ſtill out of his reach: when appearing to him one day, as he was going home to his cell, laden with leaves of palms, for his work, he endeavoured to ſtrike him, with a ſharp ſcythe, which he had in his hand, but was not able. Upon which he cried out: 'It is a hard caſe, O Macarius, 'that I ſhould ſuffer ſo much from thee; and yet 'ſhould not be able to hurt thee: whereas I do a 'great deal more than thou doſt, in point of faſting 'and watching: for though thou faſteſt, and watcheſt 'often; yet ſometimes thou eateſt and ſleepeſt: but 'I never eat, nor cloſe my eyes to ſleep. But I 'own there is one thing, in which thou overcomeſt 'me. And what is that, ſaid the ſaint? Oh! 'tis 'thy humility, ſaid the devil: there is nothing elſe 'conquers me.' With that the Saint ſtretching forth his hands to heaven in prayer, the enemy preſently vaniſhed away.

The humility of the Saint was accompanied with an extraordinary meekneſs: as theſe two virtues uſually go hand in hand. And this meekneſs of his wrought greater wonders, in bringing ſouls to God, than any of his miracles. As it appeared in the caſe of a pagan prieſt, who having been excited to fury, by the contemptuous treatment, he had met with from another religious; was not only appeaſed, but gained over on the ſpot to Jeſus Chriſt, by the mildneſs and ſweetneſs, with which he was treated by St. Macarius: Inſomuch that he quitted the world at once, to become a religious man, and gave occaſion by his example to the converſion of many other pagans.

The humility of Macarius was alſo accompanied with a wholeſome fear of the divine juſtice, together with a deep ſenſe of his own ſins, and an ex-

traordinary compunction for them; which continued with him even to the end of his life. As a proof of this, we read, that not long before his death, when the monks of Nitria ſent to him, to deſire he would come over to their mountain, that they might receive his bleſſing, before he departed to the Lord; declaring that otherwiſe they would all come in a body to viſit him: he complied indeed with their requeſt; but when all the multitude of the brethren were aſſembled about him, deſiring to hear the word of God from his mouth; inſtead of a ſermon, he entertained them with a flood of tears, ſaying to them: 'Let us weep, brethren, let us weep, whilſt 'we have time. Let our eyes bring forth tears, 'which may waſh away the ſtains of our ſins; be-'fore we depart hence into another world, where 'our tears ſhall come too late, and ſhall only ſerve 'to nouriſh the flames of our torments.' Theſe words, and the tears of the Saint, made all the congregation weep, and caſt themſelves down on the ground, to beg the aſſiſtance of his prayers.

Another time a certain brother deſired an inſtruction from the Saint, how he might ſecure the ſalvation of his ſoul. 'Fly, ſaid the man of God, 'from the company of men, and keep cloſe to thy 'cell: and there, continually weep for thy ſins: and '(as the beſt penance for them) take an equal care 'to mortify thy tongue, by keeping ſilence, and 'thy belly, by faſting and abſtinence.' To the like effect, he ſaid to the brethren, when one day after maſs they were coming out of church: 'Fly, bre-'thren, fly. Whither, O father, ſaid one of them, 'wouldſt thou have us to fly? can we go farther 'from the world, than we are in this vaſt ſolitude?' The Saint put his finger to his tongue; and ſaid, I mean that we ſhould fly from this: and ſaying no more, he entered into his cell, and there remained in recollection and ſilence.

The

The prayer of St. Macarius was in a manner without ceaſing: particularly in the mental and contemplative way. He is ſaid to have been almoſt always in an extaſy, raviſhed as it were out of himſelf; and for a greater part, of his time entertaining himſelf with God, than occupied with any of the things, that are under the heavens. That he might apply himſelf more freely to God in prayer; he had made a paſſage under ground, from his cell, to a certain cave, which was at half a furlongs diſtance: to which he frequently retired, and there kept himſelf concealed from all other company; to the end, he might be alone with God, free from the interruptions of the many viſits of externs, who reſorted to him, by occaſion of the great reputation of his ſanctity. He had, during five years, frequent thoughts, that preſſed him, to go further into the deſart, to conſider what he ſhould ſee there. As it was his maxim, to do nothing raſhly: he examined well theſe ſuggeſtions, leſt they ſhould be temptations: but as the inclination ſtill continued with him; taking it to be Gods holy will, he followed the call; and penetrated into the remote parts of the wilderneſs: where he found a pool of water, and in it a ſmall Iſland; and two ſolitaries, who had lived there for forty years, quite ſeparated from all converſation with mortals; and in ſo great a perfection, that Macarius after having ſeen and converſed with them; according to his humble way of thinking of himſelf, profeſſed to the religious of Nitria (when ſome time after they deſired him to make them a diſcourſe of edification, in the monaſtery of abbot Pambo) that for his part, he was not worthy to be called a *monk*; but that he had ſeen *monks* indeed. And that the leſſon he had learnt of them was, that to be a *monk indeed*, a man muſt abſolutely renounce all things in this world: and that if he thought himſelf too weak, to practice this renuncia-

tion, in the manner they did, he ſhould go home to his cell, and there ſit, and bewail his ſins.

The zeal, that Macarius had for his own ſpiritual advancement, carried him alſo another time, a fifteen days journey, from the deſart of Scete, to viſit St. Antony, then reſiding on his mountain. When he came to the place, quite ſpent, with his long travelling through thoſe burning ſands, he knockt at the door of the Saint's cell: Antony coming out, aſked him who he was? And upon his anſwering that he was Macarius, he went in again, and ſhut the door upon him. For though he had a great deſire, of a long time, to ſee him, as knowing his extraordinary ſanctity; he was willing to make this trial of his patience and humility. Macarius remained at the door, till Antony thinking he had now tried him long enough, opened it to him; and having lovingly embraced him, entertained him with the beſt that his cell could afford. In the evening, Antony prepared a certain quantity of leaves of palm-trees, for himſelf to work on, at making of matts: Macarius, who was ever a lover of manual labours, and hated to ſit idle, deſired to be employed in the ſame manner: and thus they ſat down together, working with their hands, and entertaining one another with heavenly diſcourſes, and with the praiſes of their great maſter. In the morning, Antony was ſurprized to ſee the quantity of matting, that Macarius had made that night: and taking his hands, he kiſſed them, affirming, that there was much virtue in thoſe hands. I know not whether it was upon this, or upon ſome other occaſion, that he ſaw the Holy Spirit deſcend upon Macarius: for I find it recorded of St. Antony; that he himſelf declared, he had ſeen the Holy Ghoſt come down upon three eminent ſervants of God; who in their lives appeared to be, in an extraordinary manner, repleniſhed with his graces: and

and that theſe three were, St. Athanaſius, St. Pachomius, and St. Macarius.

As to the penitential exercices practiſed by St. Macarius, and by all his diſciples the ſolitaries of Scete; they will appear more to be admired, than imitated; eſpecially in the point of faſting: for we read in ſome ancient writers, that their cuſtom was to eat but once in the week: and as to St. Macarius himſelf, he told his diſciple Evagrius, upon occaſion of his complaining of a violent thirſt, which he felt, in the exceſſive noon-day heat, of the Egyptian climate; that for his own part, for twenty years, he had never ſatisfied himſelf, either in point of eating, or drinking, or ſleeping: that he always weighed out the little quantity of bread, that he eat; always drank his water by meaſure; and leaned always againſt a wall, inſtead of lying down, when he ſtole, as it were, the little, ſleep which he could not abſolutely paſs without.

But if he was ſo perfectly mortified, in his eating, drinking and ſleeping; we may truly ſay, he was as much, or more ſo, in regard to his paſſions, and his whole interiour: and that he diligently practiſed himſelf in this reſpect the excellent leſſons, he ſo often taught his diſciples. He uſed to ſay, that the *true monk*, was he that overcame himſelf in all things: that the way to eſcape the death of the ſoul by ſin, was to receive and embrace contempt, like praiſe; poverty like riches, and hunger and want, like plenty and feaſting. A young man once addreſſed himſelf to him, to learn of him, the practiſe of religious perfection. He ſent him to a place, where there were a great many dead bodies; and bid him treat them, with reviling and ſcornful language, and other ſuch like affronts and injuries; and even to pelt them with ſtones: to try if he could provoke them to paſſion. The young man did as he was bidden; and when he came back, the Saint aſked him, how the

dead had taken all thoſe outrages? and what they had ſaid? He anſwered: they had not ſaid one word. On the next day, he ſent him again; and bid him treat them with honour, and with fine ſpeeches and praiſes; and ſee how they then would behave: and as they ſtill remained equally inſenſible, both to his good, and his bad treatment. The Saint told him, that if he would be a perfect religious man, he muſt follow this example; and neither ſuffer himſelf to be provoked to anger or reſentment, by any ill treatment; nor to be puffed up with the eſteem or praiſes of men: but always to have his eye on Jeſus Chriſt, and only ſeek to pleaſe him.

St. Macarius had now arrived at the age of 76 years; when a violent perſecution was raiſed againſt all the religious, by Lucius the Arian; who after the death of St. Athanaſius, had uſurped the ſee of Alexandria, by the favour of the emperor Valens. This unhappy man, finding the monks in general averſe to his wicked tenets, and the people very much influenced, by their example, to adhere to the Catholick faith: led out a multitude of ſoldiers, into the deſarts, in order to oblige theſe ſervants of God, by all manner of cruelties, to renounce the ancient faith. A great number of the ſolitaries of mount Nitria were martyred on this occaſion: a great number of other religious, together with many biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, were ſent into baniſhment. Amongſt theſe were Macarius, and his nameſake the other St. Macarius of Alexandria, St. Iſidore of Scete, and St. Pambo the holy abbot of Nitria: who by the orders of Lucius were taken out of their cells, privately in the night; and carried away into a certain iſland of Egypt, which was inhabited only by pagans: to the end that they might have no opportunity there, of exerciſing their prieſtly functions; nor meet with any comfort, or ſupport from any man. In this iſland, there was an ancient temple of the

the devils, for which the inhabitants had a great veneration: and it was this that kept them in their idolatry. But ſee the wonders of God! As ſoon as the boat, that brought the ſaints thither, drew near to the land, thoſe devils, that inhabited that temple, were all in an uproar: and one of them preſently entered in to the daughter of the prieſt of the temple, (whom the people venerated almoſt as much as their god) and cauſed in her ſtrange and violent agitations and contorſions, accompanied with ſuch lowd ſcreeks and cries, as reached the very heavens, and drew all the people about her. In this condition ſhe run about amongſt the people; falling down ſometimes, and rolling herſelf on the ground, foaming, and gnaſhing with her teeth; till all on a ſudden ſhe was lifted up into the air, and carried to the place, where the ſaints by this time were ſet on ſhore: the people all following, to ſee what would become of her. Here ſhe fell down at the feet of Macarius and his companions; and cried out (the devil ſpeaking by her mouth as he did heretofore by the girl at Phillippi, Acts xvi.) 'Ah! ye ſervants of Jeſus 'Chriſt, how terrible is your power! ye ſervants of 'the great God, why do you come to drive us 'away from a place, where we have kept ſo long 'poſſeſſion? Here have we hidden ourſelves, after 'we were driven out from the reſt of the land: for 'you have baniſhed us from the towns and villages, 'from the mountains and hills, and even from the 'places, where none before you durſt inhabit. We 'expected to be quiet at leaſt in this little iſland, in 'the midſt of boggs and marſhes: and now you 'are come to deprive us of this our laſt refuge, *&c.*' Whilſt the devil was ſaying theſe, and other ſuch like things, by the mouth of the girl; the Saints, on their part, made uſe of the power their Lord had given them; and commanded the devil, by the awful name of Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, to go out,

out. He being unable to reſiſt, was conſtrained to obey; and departing, left the girl ſtretched out on the ground, as one dead. The Saints prayed for her; and lifting her up from the ground, preſented her to her father, in perfect health, both of mind and body. Then taking occaſion from what had paſſed, they begun to preach Jeſus Chriſt to this people, already diſpoſed, by the miracle they had ſeen, to hearken to their words. And ſo great was the bleſſing God gave to their preaching, that preſently both the prieſt himſelf, with his daughter, and all his kindred, caſt himſelf down at the feet of theſe new apoſtles, deſiring to learn of them, what he muſt do to be ſaved; and all the people of the iſland, by their example, were immediately converted to Jeſus Chriſt. They embraced the faith, with ſo much fervour, that they preſently demoliſhed their temple, which they had ſo much revered, and built up a church in its place, and after proper inſtructions, received baptiſm. Thus the baniſhment of theſe ſervants of God, contributed to the propagation, and illuſtration of the faith, for which they were baniſhed; and to the confuſion of their enemies and perſecutors; who upon receiving the news of what had paſſed, gave orders to have them removed again out of the iſland, and privately conveyed back to their former ſolitudes.

St. Macarius outlived this perſecution many years: and after having attained to the age of ninety years, ſixty of which he had ſpent in the wilderneſs; he went to enjoy his God, about the year 390, or 391. His name is recorded amongſt the Saints, in the Roman martyrology on the fifteenth of January.

There are extant in the *Bibliotheca SS. patrum*, fifty homilies, or diſcourſes of piety, which St. Macarius made to his religious on ſeveral occaſions, truly worthy of his ſpirit and ſanctity.

ST.

S.T. MACARIUS of Alexandria.

From Palladius, biſhop of Helenopolis, ſometime diſciple of the Saint, Hiſtoria Lauſiaca, chap. 19. *Ruffinus and others.*

ST. Macarius, commonly called the *Alexandrian*, to diſtinguiſh him from the other St. Macarius, of whom we have been treating, was born at Alexandria, about the beginning of the fourth century. In his younger days, he ſought an honeſt livelihood, by ſelling fruits, ſweetmeats, and ſuch like wares. Till being called by God to greater perfection, he left all things, to follow Chriſt, in an anachoretical life: and put himſelf under the direction of St. Antony, in order to learn from ſo great a maſter the true ſcience of the ſaints. The progreſs he made in this ſchool of grace, was ſo extraordinary, that he quickly became fit to be himſelf a maſter, and a teacher of many others, in the ways of true life: as St. Antony ſaw and acknowledged, when one day Macarius being with him, and aſking him for ſome beautiful palm-branches, which he kept for his work; he told him it was written: *Thou ſhalt not covet thy neighbours goods*: at which words the palm-branches in an inſtant all withered away, and grew quite dry, as if they had been touched by the fire. which St. Antony ſeeing, told Macarius, that he perceived that the Spirit of God had taken up his abode in his ſoul: and that from this time forward, he ſhould look upon him, as the heir and ſucceſſor of all thoſe graces and gifts, which the divine bounty had beſtowed upon himſelf.

Sometime after this the devil ſeeing him in his wilderneſs, exceedingly fatigued with travelling, and quite ſpent for want of food, ſuggeſted to him: 'ſince thou haſt received the grace of Antony, why 'doſt

'doſt not thou make uſe of his power; and aſk of 'God for food and ſtrength; that thou mayſt be able 'to go on thy way? The Saint replied. The Lord 'is my ſtrength. The Lord is my glory: but for 'thy part be gone Satan; and dont thou pretend to 'tempt one that is determined to be the ſervant of 'his divine majeſty.' The devil upon this took the ſhape of a camel, that appeared to be wandring about in the deſart, laden with all kind of neceſſaries for life; and coming up he ſtood near to the Saint: who ſuſpecting it to be a diabolical illuſion, prayed to God, and preſently the phantom ſunk into the earth, and diſappeared.

From the deſart of Thebais, where St. Antony reſided, Macarius paſſed to that of Scete: and partly here; partly on mount Nitria, or in the neighbouring wilderneſs, called Cellia (or the place of the cells) he ſpent the greateſt part of his mortal life. In this laſt place, he was, on account of his eminent ſanctity, ordained prieſt: and in that quality had the charge of the church, that was there; and the ſuperiority, and direction of all thoſe ſaintly ſouls, that lived diſperſed in ſeparate cells, in that holy ſolitude. Here he ſhone forth with ſuch extraordinary virtues, and great miracles, as to have been looked upon, both then, and ever ſince, as one of the brighteſt lights of the church of God in his time: and on that account, he had alſo a great ſhare in the perſecution, which under Valens the Arian emperour, fell in a particular manner upon the religious of theſe quarters. When alſo, as we have ſeen above, he was ſent into baniſhment, with ſome other eminent ſervants of God; and by miracle converted the inhabitants of the iſland, to which they were baniſhed, from idolatry to the faith of Chriſt.

As to the employment of his time, in theſe wilderneſſes, we find he diſtributed it in ſuch manner, as to give a good part of it to prayer; in which he exerciſed

ercised himself a hundred times in the four and twenty hours: another part of it he gave to manual labours, in order for his livelyhood; and the remainder he gave to them, that came to consult him, about the affairs of their souls, and to receive instructions from him. In the mean time, the austerities of a penitential life, to which he condemned himself, were so great, that we may truly say, they are much more to be admired than imitated. His fasts were long and rigorous: for seven years he never eat any thing but raw herbs or pulse, moistened in cold water, without any bread, or any thing that had come near the fire. For three other years, he lived only upon four or five ounces of bread in a day, with water in proportion. Once for the space of twenty days, he laboured to live without any sleep at all: and to this purpose, for all that time, he entred not under any covert; but exposed himself all the day long to the parching heat of the sun; and all the night to the cold air abroad: till he could hold out no longer, and was constrained to yield to nature. Another time, to penance himself for a fault, that was very small, or none at all, (or, as others say, to extinguish a temptation of the flesh) he condemned himself to pass six whole months, in the marshes of Scete, in the remote parts of the desart: where there is a number of large Gnats, with stings like wasps; by which, during this his course of penance, he was so roughly treated, and stung in so terrible a manner, that at his return home, his whole body was like that of a leper, and he could not be known but by his voice.

The great reputation of the extraordinary austerities, and the excellent lives of the religious of Tabenna, under their holy founder St. Pachomius, inspired Macarius with a desire of going, and joining their holy company; yet so as not be known by them, who, or what he was. In order to this, changing his

his habit for the dress of a common labourer, he travelled fifteen days journey, through the desarts, till he came to the monastery of Tabenna. Here calling for the abbot St. Pachomius, he begged to be admitted amongst his monks. The abbot told him, that at his time of life, he could not be able to conform himself to the austerities, which were practised in that monastery: and therefore he refused to admit him. However Macarius did not desist; but continued for seven days at the gate, begging for admittance, and fasting the whole time; till his perseverance prevailed with the abbot and community to receive him in. And now the penitential time of Lent was come: in which the religious appointed to themselves the particular exercises of devotion and penance, in which they designed to pass that holy time: some of them resolving to eat but once in two days; others but twice, in a week; others again, after spending the whole day in manual labours, proposing to watch, and pass the night in prayer, without lying down at all. Macarius for his part said nothing; but gathering together a large provision of the leaves of palm-trees for making of matts, he passed the whole time, standing in a corner by himself, at his work, with his heart raised to God in silent prayer; without so much as once sitting down, or leaning on any thing whatsoever; and only eating on the Lord's day, and then nothing but some raw leaves of cabbage, without any bread, or any thing else, or even drinking any thing at all. The rest of the religious, seeing him practise these extraordinary austerities, began to murmur against their abbot, for having brought in amongst them, for their condemnation, a man that seemed not to be made of flesh and blood: whereupon St. Pachomius, who was frequently favoured with divine revelations, applying himself to God in prayer, with a desire to know who this person was, that had passed lent in this extraordinary manner;

manner; learnt from God that it was the abbot Macarius, of whoſe ſanctity he had heard ſo much. Whereupon taking him by the hand, and leading him into the chappel, where the altar of the monaſtery was, he ſaid to him: 'Is it then you, venerable 'father? You are the celebrated Macarius: and you 'would not let me know it. It is a long time, that 'I have had a deſire to ſee you: and now I muſt 'return you thanks, for the ſtay you have made 'amongſt us; by which you have humbled my 'children, and taught them not to think much 'of their own performances. You have ſufficiently 'edified us by your preſence: I beg of you now to 'return home, and there to pray for us.' And ſo he diſmiſſed the Saint, to go back to his former habitation.

But if theſe rigorous penances, and extraordinary auſterities of St. Macarius may ſeem to be out of the reach of our imitation; we cannot ſay the ſame with regard to the following inſtance, of the ſpirit, as well of mortification, as of charity, which both he and his ſhewed upon a leſſer occaſion; as it is recorded in the hiſtory of his life. Some one brought him a fine bunch of grapes, at a time when he had a longing deſire after that kind of fruit. But to exerciſe himſelf at once both in abſtinence and charity, he ſent them to another ſolitary; who being ſick and infirm ſtood more in need of them. This good man, after thankfully receiving the preſent, (which if he would have followed his own inclinations, he would gladly have eaten,) through the ſame ſpirit of mortification, and charity, refrained from them, and ſent them away to a third, who lived at ſome diſtance in the wilderneſs; and this third again to a fourth; and ſo on, till they had paſſed from one to another, to moſt of the holy inhabitants of the cells, diſperſed thro' that deſart, without any one's taſting of them At. length he that received them laſt,

not

not knowing from whom they first came, and thinking they might be agreeable to their holy father, sent them to St. Macarius. The Saint perceiving the grapes to be the very same, and learning also by enquiry, how many hands they had passed through; gave God thanks for that spirit of abstinence and self-denial, which his brethren had shewed on this occasion; and for his own part, was animated thereby to a greater fervour in all the exercices of a spiritual life. But after all he would not be induced to eat of the grapes himself.

As to the miracles of this Saint, church history assures us, that the two Saints Macarius were equally illustrious, not only for the works of faith, but also for the miraculous graces, and other supernatural gifts, with which God favoured them: that they equally excelled in the knowledge of the secrets of God; and in the power, which they had to make themselves terrible to the devils, to cure diseases, and to work all kind of wonders. It is particularly recorded of our Saint, that he had an extraordinary grace, in casting out unclean spirits, and delivering numbers, that were possessed or obsessed by them. The tempter took occasion from hence to suggest to him one day thoughts of vain glory, which tended to draw him out of his solitude, under the specious pretext of doing good to many; and to carry him to Rome; that he might exercise there his talent in casting out devils, and curing all diseases, in that great capital of the universe. Macarius saw through the deceit, and strongly resisted the suggestion. And as the temptation did not cease, but still grew stronger and stronger upon him, he laid himself down on the threshold of his cell, and cried out to the demon of vain glory, that tempted him: that there he would lie till the evening: and that if he would have him from thence, it should be by main force: for that with his good will, he would never

go,

go, how much ſoever he might tempt him. After ſunſet, finding the temptation coming on again more violently than ever, he took a large baſket, that held two buſhels, and filling it with ſand, laid it on his ſhoulders, and being loaded in this manner walked up and down in the deſart. Theoſebius ſurnamed Coſmetor, a native of Antioch, met him whilſt he was at this exercice, and aſked him: 'What is the meaning of this holy father? Why 'do you thus torment yourſelf? Let me eaſe you 'of your burthen. Macarius replied: I am pla-'guing one, that is plaguing me; and who ſeeing that 'I am lazy at home, will needs have me go and 'travel abroad:' and thus he continued carrying about his load of ſand, till being quite wearied and ſpent, and all bruiſed, with his burthen, he returned to his cell.

As to the particulars of all the miracles wrought by St. Macarius, we ſhall not pretend to ſet them down here: we ſhall only take notice of one, recorded by Palladius, of which, he was an eye witneſs. This prelate relates, that being at that time himſelf a diſciple of the Saint, he came one day to his cell, and found there lying before the door, a prieſt of a country pariſh, in the moſt wretched condition that can be imagined; his head being eaten in ſuch manner by a cancer, that a great part of his ſkull was ſeen quite bare. He came thither to ſeek his cure from the Saint: but he would not take any notice at all of him. Upon which Palladius going in, began to interceed for him. The Saint anſwered, that he was unworthy to be delivered from this evil, which God had ſent him for his puniſhment. 'But, ſaid he, if you deſire he ſhould 'be cured, prevail on him to make a reſolution ne-'ver more to preſume to approach to the altar, to ce-'lebrate the ſacred myſteries. For this puniſhment, 'has been ſent him, becauſe being guilty of ſins of

'impurity he has ſaid maſs in that condition.' Palladius told the poor man what the Saint had ſaid: upon which he promiſed with an oath that he would never more meddle with any of the prieſtly functions. Upon this promiſe the Saint received him in, and after he had confeſſed his ſins, with a ſincere reſolution of never more returning to them; he laid his hands upon him, and in a few days ſent him home perfectly cured, and glorifying God.

As to the other extraordinary gifts and graces of St. Macarius; it is recorded of him, that he often ſaw in ſpirit the ſtate of the ſouls of his religious, at the time of their communion: as alſo their inward thoughts, and diſpoſitions in the time of prayer. One night the devil knockt at the door of his cell, calling out to him: 'Get up, abbot Macarius, that 'we may go with the brethren to the midnight 'prayers.' The Saint knowing, by the light of God, 'that it was the enemy, replied: And what haſt thou 'to do, O lying ſpirit, enemy of all truth, with the 'aſſembly of the Saints, and with their night prayers? 'O ſaid the devil, aſſure thyſelf Macarius, that the 'religious never meet to their prayers, without us. 'Come along, and thou ſhalt ſee our works.' The Saint prayed to God, that he might know whether what the devil vaunted of, was true or no. Then going to the place, where the brethren were aſſembled for the night office; at the time they were reciting the pſalms, he ſaw a number of theſe wicked ſpirits, in the ſhape of little filthy blackamoors, running about the church; and playing a thouſand tricks, to diſturb and diſtract the religious; or to make them heavy to ſleep: and when after the twelve pſalms were ended, they proſtrated themſelves in ſilent prayer; he perceived how buſy the ſame little blacks were about them, repreſenting to one the figure of a woman, to another a building, or a journey, and to others a great variety of ſuch like ſhows and

'images.

images. Now ſome there were of the brethren, that ſeemed to puſh theſe blacks away from them, by a ſuperior force, and to fling them down upon their backs, with ſo much violence, that they durſt not come near them any more: whilſt others, more indolent and negligent, ſuffered them to ride upon their heads and ſhoulders, and to make a mockery of them at pleaſure. The Saint was much moved with this ſpectacle, and addreſſed himſelf to God, with many tears, in behalf of his religious; begging he would deliver them from all the ſnares and deceits of theſe ſpirits of darkneſs: uſing thoſe words of the royal prophet Pſ. lxvii. *Let God ariſe, and his enemies be ſcattered: and let them that hate him flee from before his face.* Then after the prayers were ended, calling to him the brethren, he found, by enquiring of each one in particular, that they had been diſtracted in the time of prayer, with thoſe ſame vain, or wicked imaginations, which the Saint had ſeen repreſented to them by thoſe blacks. Hence they came to underſtand, that thoſe diſtracting thoughts, which ſo often interrupt the attention and devotion of the ſoul, in the divine office, and other prayers, are illuſions of theſe wicked ſpirits; and that the true way to repell them, and to keep them at a diſtance, is to watch over ourſelves in the time of prayer, and to keep our ſouls united to God, by a fervent application of all our powers to him.

'Tis alſo recorded of Saint Macarius, that one day being in company with the other Saint of the ſame name, and obliged to paſs over the river Nile, in the barge, or ferry that ſerved for that purpoſe; it happened that two tribunes or colonels, were ferried over at the ſame time, having with them a pompous equipage, and a great retinue. Theſe officers, ſeeing the two Saints, in their poor garb, at one end of the barge, with all that ſerenity, recollection, and inward peace, which ſeemed to be painted on their

faces, together with a ſovereign contempt of all that this world admires; could not help extolling to one another the happineſs of ſuch a kind of life, as that was which theſe ſervants of God led. And one of them addreſſing himſelf to the Saints, ſaid: 'You 'two are happy, who are thus above the world, and 'tread it under your feet.' 'You ſpeak as if it 'were by a prophetic light, replied our Saint, in 'calling us *happy*; for the name of both of us is *Ma-* 'carius, which in the greek ſignifies *happy*. But if 'you have great reaſon to ſay, that they who have 'renounced all things elſe, to conſecrate themſelves 'entirely to the ſervice of God, are happy, inaſ- 'much as they tread the world under their feet: we 'have alſo great reaſon to pity and compaſſionate 'your unhappineſs, in being ſlaves to the world, 'and letting yourſelves be mocked by it.' Theſe words of the Saint made ſuch an impreſſion upon this colonel, that returning home, he gave up his commiſſion, diſtributed his ſubſtance to the poor, and leaving the world, embraced a ſolitary and religious life.

We ſhall conclude our account of the life of St. Macarius, with a remarkable hiſtory, recorded by St. Jerome; of a certain ſolitary of Nitria, who of the price of his work, which was making linnen cloth, had ſaved ſo much money, that when he died, there was found by him, the ſum of one hundred crowns. The religious were aſſembled, on this extraordinary occaſion, to deliberate what ſhould be done with this money: which ſome thought ſhould be given to the poor, or to the church; and others to the kindred of the deceaſed. But Macarius (our Saint) and Pambo and Iſidore, and the others, who were called the fathers, being inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, ordained that they ſhould caſt the money into the grave together with the corps, repeating thoſe words, of St. Peter to Simon Magus,

gus. *Keep thy money to thyſelf, to periſh with thee.* And this wholeſome ſeverity ſpread ſuch a terrour amongſt all the religious of Egypt, that they looked upon it as a crime for any one of them to leave ſo much as one crown after their death.

St. Macarius departed to our Lord, (after having ſerved him for ſixty years at leaſt in a religious life) about the year 395. His name is regiſtered in the Roman martyrology on the ſecond of January.

ST. ISIDORE AND ST. PAMBO.

WE join theſe two together, and give them a place immediately after St. Macarius; with whom, as we have ſeen above, they are joined by St. Jerome; as having been the moſt eminent in their days amongſt the fathers of the deſarts, and men inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt. With whom alſo, and with the other, St. Macarius, they are celebrated by all our church hiſtorians, for the brave ſtand they made againſt the Arian hereſy, under Valens the emperour; and for the perſecutions they ſuffered on this occaſion; as well as for the eminence of their ſanctity, and the great ſigns and wonders, which God wrought by them. They were both of them ſometime diſciples of St. Antony; and both of them afterwards for their extraordinary virtues and merits, advanced to the prieſtly dignity; and made chief ſuperiors; the one, (Iſidore) of the religious of the deſart of Scete; the other, (Pambo) of thoſe of mount Nitria.

'Tis recorded of St. Iſidore, that he had received ſo ſingular a grace from God, and ſo great a power and virtue againſt all evil ſpirits; that whenſoever any perſons were brought to him, that were poſſeſſed by the devil, they never failed to be delivered, even before they reached the door of his cell. And as the brethren aſked him one day, what ſhould be the reaſon, why the devils were ſo much afraid of him? He alledged no other but this; that from the time of his entring into religion, he had made it his conſtant endeavour, not to ſuffer the paſſion of anger to riſe up in him ſo high, as to reach his tongue. As a proof of his zeal for ſuppreſſing in himſelf every motion of this paſſion, we are informed by an ancient writer, that when he had one day carried ſome little baſkets to market for ſale, upon meeting

meeting there with ſome provocation, which began to excite in his heart the firſt motions of wrath; he immediately flung down his baſkets, and ran away, as faſt as he could, to the wilderneſs. By his diligence, in watching againſt, and ſuppreſſing all the irregular motions, and ſuggeſtions of his paſſions; and by the help of continual prayer, he arrived at ſo great a maſtery over himſelf, that he acknowledged one day, to the greater glory of God, that for the ſpace of forty years, though he had often experienced the motions and ſuggeſtions of ſin, he was not conſcious to himſelf, that he had ever given voluntary conſent, either to any irregular deſire, or to any motion of wrath.

From his firſt entring into religion, inſtead of ſetting himſelf a taſk, as many did, of a certain number of pſalms, or prayers, to be daily recited: he choſe rather to be always praying, night and day. And yet he was always a great lover and follower of manual labours: inſomuch that even after he was grown very old, he could not be prevailed upon to leave off working, not even when night was come. And when the brethren, upon theſe occaſions, would be ſometimes begging of him, to give himſelf a little more reſt. He replied that all he could do, or ſuffer, was nothing in compariſon with what the Son of God had done and ſuffered for him; and therefore he though the could never do, nor ſuffer enough, for the love of his Saviour. He ſaid one day to the aſſembly of the ſolitaries of Scete: 'Are we not come 'hither my brethren, in order to ſuffer, in this place, 'many labours and pains in the body, by the means of 'which we may merit the everlaſting reſt of the ſoul, in 'heaven. And yet how little is it we ſuffer here at 'preſent? For my part, I think of taking my ſheep-'ſkin, and ſeeking out ſome other place, where I 'may have ſomething more to ſuffer.' Which he ſaid, becauſe by this time, the number of them, that

reſorted to this deſart, had given occaſion to the introducing there certain conveniences of life, and ſome better accommodations, than they had been accuſtomed to in the beginning, when they were in a manner quite deſtitute of all things.

'Tis alſo recorded as a maxim of St. Iſidore. 'That 'the whole ſcience of the Saints, is to ſtudy, to know, '(and to follow,) the holy will of God: becauſe then 'only can a man be perfect indeed, when, getting up 'above all other things, he ſubjects himſelf to the 'eternal Truth and Juſtice. For ſince man was made 'after the image and likeneſs of God, who is that 'ſame eternal Truth and Juſtice, he cannot meet with 'either perfection or happineſs, but only in con-'formity with his original. On the other hand, he 'ſaid, that the moſt dangerous of all temptations, 'was to follow ones own heart, and ones own 'thoughts, inſtead of the will of God: that the 'pleaſure, which a man pretended to find, in gra-'tifying his own inclinations, was quickly changed 'into bitterneſs; and left nothing behind it, but the 'regret of having been ignorant of the ſecret of 'true beatitude, and of the way of the Saints. From 'whence he concluded, that the true way to hap-'pineſs, was to be willing now to labour, and to 'take pains in the ſervice of the Lord; and to ſuf-'fer the ſhort tribulations of this life, for the ſe-'curing the eternal ſalvation of the ſoul, by the 'exercice of patience.

This Saint had alſo a great grace from God, for the ſpiritual cure of the religious, if any of them were diſeaſed in their ſouls. Inſomuch that if it happened at any time, that the other ſuperiors were for diſmiſſing any of their ſubjects, by reaſon of their negligence, ſlothfulneſs, impatience, paſſion, or other defects, he deſired they might be brought to him: and by treating them with his uſual charity, humility, and patience; he brought them to a right

ſenſe

ſenſe of their duty, and in time cured them of their vices, and faults, of what kind ſoever.

When Theophilus was made patriarch of Alexandria (anno 385) St. Iſidore went to make him a viſit. After his return to the wilderneſs, the brethren enquired of him what news he brought from the city? He told them, he had ſeen no body there but the patriarch. They were ſurprized at his anſwer: and aſked him, what then was become of all the people of that great city? Surely, ſaid they, they are not all ſwallowed up with an earth-quake? This obliged him to explain himſelf: by letting them know, that he had kept that guard upon his eyes, that he had not allowed them to look upon any one.

St. Iſidore departed to our Lord in a good old age not long after this, (the particular year is not known) and his name ſtands recorded in the Roman martyrology, on the fifteenth of January.

Amongſt divers great men of the name of Iſidore, there was another, who was cotemporary with our Saint; and was abbot in Thebais, over a thouſand monks, who lived in great reputation of ſanctity, under a ſtrict encloſure, ſo that neither any of them were allowed to go out at any time, nor any one from abroad to come in amongſt them; except he came to ſtay with them for good and all, and never more to go out. They had gardens and wells within their own incloſure: and if there were any neceſſity of any thing from abroad, there were two of the ancients deputed to provide ſuch neceſſaries; all the reſt attending only to their regular exercices.

To come now to St. Pambo: 'tis recorded of him, that being in his younger days a diſciple of St. Antony, he deſired his maſter to give him ſome leſſons for the ſaving his ſoul. St. Antony told him, that in order to this, he muſt take care to do true penance for his ſins: that he muſt never have any confidence at all in his own righteouſneſs: that he muſt labour

labour to act in every thing in such manner, as to have no occasion afterwards to repent of what he had done: and that in particular he must labour to put a restraint, upon his tongue, and upon his appetite.

In those days, he also applied himself to another of the religious, to learn of him some of the psalms. This brother began with the thirty-eighth psalm: *I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue.* Which words Pambo had no sooner heard, but without waiting for the second verse, he retired to his cell, saying, that was enough for one lesson; and that he would go, and endeavour to learn it in practice. Six months after this the brother, seeing that he did not come to him for any more lessons, asked him the meaning why he staid away so long from him. O brother, said he, I have not yet perfectly learnt, in practice, the first verse, which you taught me. Many years after this, one of his friends asked him, if he had not now at least learnt his lesson? To whom he answered, that with much ado, he had scarce been able yet to compass it, with nineteen years continual application. However by his perpetual attention, not to offend in his words, he arrived at length at so great perfection in this particular, that he is thought in this to have equalled, or even to have excelled St. Antony himself. When any one consulted him, either upon any passage of the Scripture, or any other spiritual matter, he never would answer upon the spot, but desired time to consider on it. He employed sometimes whole months, on these occasions, in examining before God what answer he should give. But then his answers which he returned, carried with them so much weight, and were so holy, that they were received by all, like oracles dictated by heaven.

St. Pambo did not continue always with St. Antony: but leaving Thebais, he took up his abode, either

either in the deſart of Scete, as ſome ſay, or in that of Nitria, where he had a monaſtery on the mountain. He was alſo for ſome time in the wilderneſs of the Cells: where Rufinus ſays, he went to receive his benediction (anno 374.) As to his exteriour practices: St. Pemen uſed to relate, that he had remarked three things in St. Pambo, which he judged to be very extraordinary: *viz.* his faſting on all days till the evening; his continual ſilence; and his great diligence in manual labours. He alſo related, that St. Antony had given teſtimony in favour of St. Pambo; that the fear of God, which poſſeſſed his ſoul, had made the Spirit of God to take up his reſting place in him. The eminent grace of his interiour is ſaid to have broke forth, and ſhewed itſelf in his exteriour; by a certain majeſty in his face, and a kind of light, like what we read of Moſes; ſo that a perſon could not look ſteadfaſtly on his face. He often begged of God, for the ſpace of three whole years, that he would not glorify him in this manner upon earth. But his divine majeſty, inſtead of hearing him in this particular, choſe rather to eſtabliſh in him an humility ſo profound, as not to be altered, or any ways prejudiced by this glory.

St. Athanaſius once deſired St. Pambo, to come from his deſart to Alexandria (in order to confound the Arians, by the teſtimony given by ſo holy a man, to the divinity of Jeſus Chriſt) upon which occaſion 'tis recorded of him, that ſeeing in the city an actreſs, dreſſed up in an extraordinary manner, for the ſtage; he wept bitterly: and being aſked the reaſon of his tears? he anſwered that he wept partly for the wretched condition of that unhappy woman, and the loſs of her ſoul: and partly to think, that for his own part, he did not take ſo much pains to pleaſe God, as ſhe took to make herſelf agreeable to ſinful men.

Palladius

Palladius relates, in the tenth chapter of his *Hiſtoria Lauſiaca*, that Melania the elder, a noble Roman lady, coming into Egypt, and hearing of the ſanctity of St. Pambo, went to viſit him, in his monaſtery on mount Nitria: and took with her three hundred pounds weight of ſilver, which ſhe preſented to him; deſiring he would accept of ſome part of the ſtore, with which God had bleſſed her. The holy man was ſitting at his work, making matts, when ſhe came in, accompanied with Iſidore, the adminiſtrator of the hoſpital of Alexandria: and without interrupting his work, or looking at her, or her preſent; he contented himſelf with telling her, God would reward her charity. Then turning to his diſciple, he ſaid: 'Take 'this, and diſtribute it amongſt the brethren, 'that are in Lybia, and in the Iſlands; whoſe mo- 'naſteries are the moſt poor of all: but give no part 'of it, to the monaſteries of Egypt; becauſe this country is more rich and abounds more in all things.' The Lady ſtood ſtill, expecting that he would give her his benediction; or expreſs at leaſt his eſteem for ſo conſiderable a preſent, by word, or other ſign: but ſeeing that he went on with his work, without once caſting ſo much as an eye towards the cheſt of money, which ſhe had given him; ſhe ſaid to him: 'Father I dont know, whether you are aware, 'that here is three hundred pounds weight of 'ſilver? Daughter, ſaid he, (without once taking 'off his eye from his work) he to whom you made this 'offering, very well knows how much it weighs; 'without your telling him. If indeed you had 'given it to me, you might have had ſome reaſon to 'tell me its weight: but if you deſigned it as an 'offering to God, who did not diſdain the poor 'widows two mites, and even preferred them before 'the large offerings of the rich, don't ſay any more 'about it.' This paſſage Melania herſelf related to Palladius.

When

When Theophilus was made patriarch of Alexandria, he went to viſit the religious of mount Nitria; who were all aſſembled on this occaſion, to do honour to the patriarch. They deſired St. Pambo, as their ſuperior, to make ſome diſcourſe to this prelate, with which he might be edified: the holy abbot, agreeably to his maxims, and practice, replied: 'If he is not edified with my ſilence, I ſhall never 'edify him with my words.' The Saint did not long ſurvive this viſit: Melania was preſent at his death; to whom he bequeathed, by way of legacy, a baſket which he had finiſhed juſt at that time. When he was near his end, he bleſſed God, that from the time of his firſt coming into that wilderneſs (of Nitria) and building himſelf a cell there, he had never been burthenſome to any one; having always earned his own bread with the labour of his hands: and that he could not recollect any one word that he had ſpoken, which he had afterwards repented of: nevertheleſs, ſaid he, I am now going to the Lord, as one that hath not yet begun to ſerve him. He died without any ſickneſs, or pain, or the leaſt fever, or agony: and the ſame Melania took care for his burial; and carried away with her the baſket, he had given her, which ſhe kept till her death.

There was alſo another abbot Pambo, or rather Pammon, whoſe monaſtery was in the neighbourhood of Antinoe; one greatly eſteemed by St. Athanaſius: who together with St. Theodore (diſciple and ſucceſſor of St. Pachomius, in the monaſtery of Tabenna) accompanied this Saint, when he was flying from the perſecution of Julian: and who together with the ſame St. Theodore, aſſured him, on this occcaſion, by prophetic light, that his perſecutor was now actually ſlain in Perſia; and had for his ſucceſſor in the empire, one that was a good Chriſtian, but whoſe reign ſhould be ſhort. All which was found to be punctually true. This holy man, not

not long after this, departed to our Lord, full of years and good works: and St. Athanaſius in a diſcourſe he made, in the great church of Alexandria, in the preſence of his own clergy, and of many biſhops, has given a moſt ample teſtimony to his extraordinary ſanctity: declaring that he was indeed a great man of God, and worthy to be compared with St. Antony himſelf.

ST. JULIAN SABBAS.

From Theodoret, in his Philotheus, or Religious Hiſtory, chap. 2.

ST. Julian, ſirnamed *Sabbas*, or *the venerable father*, was a native of Meſopotamia: who, following the divine call, withdrew himſelf, in his youth, from the world, and took up his habitation in a den or cavern, in a vaſt wilderneſs, on the borders of Oſrhoena: a place, on many accounts, inconvenient to live in; but preferred by him, for the ſake of the ſolitude, before all the palaces of the world. Here he undertook a life of perpetual penance, and perpetual prayer: eating but once in the week, and then only ſome coarſe bread, made of millet, with a little ſalt; and drinking a ſmall quantity of water, at his meal, but never to the quenching of his thirſt: but continually feeding his ſoul, with the ſinging of pſalms, in which he took great delight, and with an interiour converſation with God in prayer: by means of which, the divine love took ſuch poſſeſſion of his heart, that he had no reliſh for any worldly thing; but night and day was ever thinking of his beloved; inſomuch, that even in his ſleep, he could dream of nothing elſe.

The great reputation of the ſaintly life, he led in the deſart, drew by degrees many diſciples to him, who were deſirous to learn of him the ſcience of ſalvation. He received them all into his cavern, and trained them up to an imitation of the exercices, which he himſelf followed: teaching them to neglect all care and ſolicitude for this periſhable carcaſs, and to be content, to lodge, and to eat like himſelf. However, as their number encreaſed, and as the dampneſs of the cavern ſpoiled the little proviſions of pickelled herbs, which they made for the infirm:

infirm: he conſented they ſhould build a hut for the preſervation of them. He went out at this time (as he frequently did for greater ſolitude, and recollection in prayer) to a diſtant part of the wilderneſs; employing ſeveral days by himſelf in ſpiritual exercices: and at his returning home, finding they had made a larger building than he had directed, he told them: 'I fear, brethren, leſt whilſt we are enlarging our earthly dwelling, which we can occupy but for a ſhort time, we ſhould ſuffer any detriment, with regard to our heavenly manſions, which are eternal.'

The method of prayer, and of performing the divine office, which this Saint taught his diſciples, was as follows. They all ſung together, within the cave, before it was day, hymns and pſalms to the divine praiſe. Then early in the morning they went out into the wilderneſs, two by two, and there obſerved this manner of worſhip: one of them ſung fifteen pſalms, ſtanding upright, whilſt the other lay proſtrate on the ground, in ſilent prayer and adoration; till the fifteen pſalms being ended, he that had ſung them, in his turn proſtrated himſelf on the ground, and adored, whilſt his companion, riſing up, ſung other fifteen pſalms. And thus alternatively ſinging and adoring, they paſſed a good part of the day. Before ſunſet, they gave themſelves a little reſt: then meeting all together in the cave, they ſung their evening hymns, to the praiſes of their creator.

As to the Saint himſelf, he made, as we have ſaid, frequent excurſions, to a far greater diſtance from his cave; and ſpent eight or ten days together, in the remoter parts of the wilderneſs, in his ſpiritual exercices. On theſe occaſions, he often took with him one of his brethren, particularly a holy man, whoſe name was James, a native of Perſia: but then he deſired his companion to keep himſelf always at a diſ-

a diſtance from him, that he might be no occaſion of diſtraction to him in his devotions. One time when James the Perſian was following him in the wilderneſs, he found a monſtrous ſerpent, lying dead in the way; which the Saint had killed, by the ſign of the croſs: as he acknowledged, upon his diſciples putting it home to him; but with a ſtrict injunction to keep the matter a ſecret, during his life. Another time when Aſterius (a young religious, who had more courage than ſtrength) had by his importunity obtained leave to accompany him, in one of thoſe excurſions; and that in the greateſt heat of the ſummer, which in thoſe deſarts is very violent; after two or three days, the young man was ſo parched up with thirſt, the ſun continually beating upon him, and no water being to be found in thoſe ſands, that he was juſt upon the point of periſhing, had not the Saint, by his prayers and tears, obtained of the Father of mercies, that a fountain of water ſhould ſpring up, to ſave the young man's life, in the very place which he had ſprinkled with his tears. Which fountain, ſaith Theodoret, continues to flow to this day. This ſame Aſterius was afterwards one of the moſt illuſtrious amongſt the diſciples of St. Julian; and propagated the holy diſcipline he had learnt of his maſter, by founding a famous monaſtery near Gindare, in the territory of Antioch, where he trained up many ſouls to religious perfection.

But theſe were not the only miracles, wrought by the prayers of St. Julian: he frequently caſt out devils, and healed divers diſeaſes. To fly the concourſe of people, which the fame of his ſanctity and miracles brought to him, and the honours they ſhewed him, which were troubleſome to his humility; he withdrew himſelf from his Meſopotamian cavern: and taking with him ſome of his diſciples, with neceſſary proviſions for a long journey; he travelled as far as mount Sinai, in Arabia: taking care not

to paſs through any town, or village, in the whole way. Here he took up his habitation: being charmed with this holy ſolitude, and the tranquillity he here enjoyed. But after having built a church, or oratory, and ſanctified for ſome time this new reſidence, with his holy exercices of prayer and penance; it was the will of God he ſhould return again to his diſciples, whom he had left behind him in his former habitation.

Here he was informed of the threats of Julian the apoſtate (who was then engaged in his expedition againſt the Perſians) and of his impious deſigns againſt the church of Chriſt, if he ſhould return with victory. Whereupon, to divert this impending ſtorm, he employed ten whole days in moſt fervent prayer, to implore the divine mercy, and protection for the church. At the end of which time he learnt by divine revelation, the unhappy death of that prince, and declared the ſame to his diſciples.

Valens, an Arian, ſucceeding not long after to the empire, was a great perſecuter of the church; and an earneſt promoter of ſuch as were addicted to his hereſy. In his time the Arians made a great havock in the church of Antioch: where alſo they had the impudence to publiſh, that St. Julian was in their ſentiments. Upon this occaſion, the Saint, at the requeſt of the Catholics, leaving his deſart, took a journey to Antioch, to bear teſtimony to the faith, and to repreſs the inſolence of the heretics. In his way thither, he miraculouſly preſerved the life of a child of a good woman, that entertained him at her houſe; who by accident was fallen into a deep well, and given over for loſt: but was found ſitting and playing upon the water, and being drawn out, declared he had ſeen the Saint all the while holding him up, and keeping him from ſinking to the bottom of the well. When he arrived at Antioch, great multitudes flockt about him, from all parts;

parts; ſome to ſee the man, ſo much renowned for his ſanctity; others to ſeek by his prayers a deliverance from the evils, with which they were afflicted. Here it pleaſed God, that he himſelf ſhould be ſeized by a violent fever. But as the Catholics apprehended, leſt the people ſhould be ſhockt on this occaſion: at their deſire, he prayed to God, that if his recovery might be of any ſervice to the church, he would be pleaſed to reſtore him to health. His prayer was immediately followed by a ſweat, which carried off his fever; and he preſently recovered. Many others were healed by his prayers upon the ſpot: after which, he went to the place (out of town) where the faithful aſſembled to their devotions. In his way he paſſed before the gate of the emperor's palace: where a poor cripple, who had no uſe at all of his legs or thighs, was inſtantly cured by the touch of his garment; ſo as to riſe up immediately, and to leap, and run. This miracle being noiſed abroad, brought an immenſe crowd about the Saint; to the great confuſion of the Arians, whoſe impoſtures were now clearly diſcovered, and confuted, by the teſtimony the Saint publickly gave to the catholic truth; and by his confirming it with evident miracles, which they could not contradict: eſpecially as the count, or governor of all the oriental diſtrict (who being grievouſly ill had ſent for the Saint) was one of thoſe who were miraculouſly cured by him.

In his return home from Antioch, he paſſed through Cyrus, the city, of which Theodoret was afterwards biſhop. Here the faithful repreſented to him the danger they were in from one Aſterius, an Arian, who had been intruded upon them for a biſhop: and who was preparing a ſermon againſt the faith of the Trinity, to impoſe upon them by his eloquent ſophiſtry. The Saint exhorted them to faſting and prayer: and joining with them in theſe ſpiritual exercices, by his intereſt with heaven, he

procured, that Aſterius was ſuddenly ſeized upon with a mortal illneſs, which within four and twenty hours, hurried him before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt: on the very eve of the feſtival, on which he deſigned to have preached his impious doctrine, in the cathedral of that city.

The Saint after this returned to his ſolitude, and there continued his accuſtomed exercices: till having attained to a good old age, he exchanged his mortal pilgrimage for a happy immortality. He is ſpoken of, with great elogium, by St. Jerome, Epiſt. 13, and by St. John Chryſoſtome, writing upon the epiſtle to the Epheſians. His name is recorded in the Roman martyrology, January 14.

ST.

St. ABRAHAM.

From his life by St. Ephrem.

St. Abraham was born [in Meſopotamia, about the year 300] of parents abounding in worldly riches; who loved him tenderly, and from his childhood, provided him with a worldly ſpouſe, to whom they promiſed him in marriage; deſigning to procure him an advantageous ſettlement, according to the world; and deſiring nothing more than to ſee him advanced to ſome poſte of honour, or worldly dignity. But God had other deſigns upon him; who inſpired him with the love of purity, and an early affection to the practices of piety, and devotion. He was remarkably diligent in frequenting the church; and in attending there to the holy ſcriptures, and carrying home with him the divine leſſons, he there heard; and meditating on them day and night. When he was come to man's eſtate, his parents made ſuch ſtrong inſtances with him, to marry the girl, to whom they had before contracted him, that after having reſiſted for ſome time, he was perfectly conſtrained to acquieſce to their will. But after celebrating the wedding feaſt, when the night came on, a ray of divine light penetrated his heart, accompanied with a ſtrong call, to quit all for the love of God; which he immediately followed: and riſing up, leaving both his ſpouſe (untouched) and his father's houſe; he went to ſome diſtance off, and hid himſelf in an empty cell, which he found fit for his purpoſe; and there with great joy, began to ſing hymns of praiſe to his deliverer

His parents and worldly friends, not knowing what was become of him, made all the ſearch they could after him; and after ſeventeen days, found him in his cell, at his prayers. But as they ſaw him

fixed in his reſolution to ſtay there; in order to bewail, as he ſaid, his ſins, and to dedicate the remainder of his life to prayer and penance; they left him to follow the call of God, and returned home. He deſired at parting, that they would not come, under pretence of viſiting him, to interrupt his ſpiritual exercices: and to the end that he might have as little communication as poſſible with the world, he ſhut himſelf up in his cell, walling up the door; and only leaving a little window, through which he received, from time to time, the ſlender proviſions which maintained his life. Here he lived free from the cares and diſtractions of the world, in great auſterity, (abſtaining even from bread) in watchings, in penitential tears, in the continual practice of a profound humility, and of a wonderful charity, and meekneſs, (which he ſhewed, without reſpect of perſons, to all the world): without ever changing, for the ſpace of ſo many years, as he continued in this ſolitude; without ever remitting, or being wearied, with his long penance; but rather finding an unſpeakable ſweetneſs in it, with which he was never ſatisfied. He conſidered every day, as if it were to be the day of his death: he ſuffered not ſo much as one day to paſs, without weeping; but was never ſeen to laugh. And yet with all this auſterity, and continual mortification, he kept always a freſh countenance, an agreeable air, and a ſtrength and vigour of body, which muſt have come from grace, and not from the ſlender nouriſhment he allowed himſelf. His very habit, not without a kind of a miracle, was not worn out, in all the fifty years, that he followed this penitential courſe of life.

The reputation of his ſanctity brought many, of all conditions, to him; to whom he gave admirable leſſons, for their ſpiritual profit. For our Lord had rewarded his early piety, with the gifts of wiſdom and underſtanding, in an eminent degree; ſo that his light

light ſhone forth to all that came near him, for their inſtruction and edification. In the mean time, his parents dying (when he had been about ten years in this ſolitude) left him their worldly ſubſtance, and great riches: which he deſired a friend of his to charge himſelf with, and to diſpoſe of all in alms and other pious uſes; to the end that he himſelf might not be diſtracted, or interrupted in his ſpiritual exercices, with any temporal concerns.

There was not far off from the city (of Edeſſa) in the neighbourhood of which the Saint had his cell, a large country town; inhabited by pagans, obſtinately addicted to their idol-worſhip, and heatheniſh ſuperſtitions; and withal barbarous and cruel, to a great degree, to all ſuch, as ſought to reclaim them from their idolatry, by preaching to them the faith of Chriſt. Inſomuch that ſeveral of the clergy, and religious of that neighbourhood, who from time to time had attempted to bring them over to Chriſtianity; inſtead of ſucceeding in their undertaking, had met with nothing but inſults and outrages; and had been forced by their barbarity to abandon their enterprize. The biſhop hearing of the heroick virtues of Abraham, caſt his eye upon him, as one whoſe charity, zeal, meekneſs and patience, ſeemed moſt likely to prevail over the blindneſs, and obſtinacy of theſe infidels: and therefore aſſembling his clergy, he propoſed to them the advancing of the man of God, to the prieſtly dignity; to the end he might go, and convert that people. They all applauded his propoſition; and went in a body, with the prelate at their head, to the cell of the holy man. The biſhop told him upon what occaſion they were come; and how great and good a work it would be in him, to go and to labour to procure the ſalvation of ſo many poor deluded ſouls. Abraham being ſurprized, and ſtruck ſad at the hearing of this propoſal, begged of the prelate, that he would not

think of ſending ſuch a miſerable wretch as him, upon ſo important and arduous an enterprize: but that he would ſuffer him to continue there in his cell, to lament, and to do penance for his manifold ſins. The biſhop encouraged him, aſſuring him that God would aſſiſt him in this great work: that his having forſaken all things elſe for the love of God, was not enough to make his ſacrifice compleat; unleſs he were alſo ready to renounce his own will, by the virtue of obedience; which is the true way to find out the will of God: that whilſt he was ſtaying in his cell, he was labouring only for his own ſalvation; but by going where he was about to ſend him, and labouring in the converſion of thoſe infidels, the grace of God cooperating with him, he would ſave the ſouls of many; and be entitled himſelf to a ſo much the greater reward in eternal bliſs. The man of God hearing all this, would not reſiſt any longer: but cried out with tears: 'The Lord's will be done! I 'am ready to go, by obedience, to whatſoever place, 'you ſhall be pleaſed to ſend me.' Thus the biſhop brought him out of his cell; and having ordained him prieſt, ſent him away to preach to that pagan people.

He began his miſſion, by prayers and tears, poured out before God, in behalf of theſe poor ſouls; in whom he found no manner of diſpoſition, to profit by his words. Then ſending to his friend, whom he had charged with the diſpoſing of all his worldly ſubſtance, left him by his parents, he procured from him a ſum of money, with which he built, in a very ſhort time, a church, and adorned it for divine ſervice. In the mean while the people (for whom he was continually ſighing and praying) made no oppoſition, although their curioſity brought them daily to ſee the building. But when, after he had finiſhed the church, and dedicated it to the living God; with a moſt fervent prayer, accompanied with many

many tears for the converſion of the idolaters; his zeal carried him from the church, to the temple of the idols, where he overthrew their altars, and broke their ſtatues in pieces; they kept no longer any meaſures with him: but falling upon him with mercileſs fury, after having diſcharged innumerable blows and ſtripes upon him, they drove him out of their town.

The next morning, when they came to the church (as they daily did, not out of devotion, but out of a certain curioſity, and a pleaſure they took in ſeeing the decorations of it) they were ſurprized beyond meaſure to find him there at his prayers. But upon his beginning to preach to them, and to conjure them, to turn from their idols to the living God; they fell upon him again, and beat him worſe than before: then faſtening a rope about his feet, they dragged him out of the town, and there they pelted him with ſtones, till they thought they had made an end of him. About midnight, he, whom they had left for dead, came to himſelf; and after making a fervent prayer, with abundance of tears, to the Father of mercies, for the converſion and ſalvation of his perſecutors, he got up, and returned again into the town; and early in the morning was found in the church ſinging pſalms. The pagans were ſtrangely aſtoniſhed at the ſight of him; yet no way mollified; but rather more enraged: ſo that they repeated again the treatment they had given him the day before, and dragged him again by the feet with ropes, out of their town. He returned nevertheleſs the next day: and thus for the ſpace of three whole years, he ſtill continued conſtant in his labours, and in his prayers, for their converſion; under a perpetual ſucceſſion of grievous ſufferings, and pains, mockeries and outrages: without ever ſhewing the leaſt anger or impatience, or giving them one ſingle bad word, or even entertaining in his ſoul any hatred, or averſion to them. On the contrary the more cruelly

cruelly they treated him, the more tenderly he loved them, and the more affectionately he invited them to come to Chriſt, *the way, the truth, and the life.*

When three years had paſſed in this manner, the patience and prayers of the Saint, prevailed at length over this obſtinate reſiſtance, which he had hitherto met with from this people. The inhabitants of the place, upon ſome occaſion, were all aſſembled together; and began to declare to one another the great admiration they were in, at the unwearied patience, and charity of the ſervant of God: and to argue from thence that the God, whom he preached to them, muſt needs be the true God; and the religion, which taught him all this patience and charity, the true religion. The more, becauſe as they reaſoned with one another, they had ſeen how he, being but one man, had caſt down, and broken in pieces all their gods, without their being able to reſiſt him, or to revenge themſelves of him. Theſe reflections, the grace of God opening their eyes, and ſoftening their hearts, produced upon the ſpot a general reſolution, of going all of them in a body to the church, to yield themſelves up to the man of God; and to embrace the faith he preached: which reſolution they preſently put in execution. The Saint received them with inexpreſſible joy: and having firſt inſtructed them in all the neceſſary articles of the Chriſtian doctrine; he baptized them all, to the number of about one thouſand perſons; men, women and children. After which he continued for the ſpace of one year, watering theſe young plants, till he ſaw them, not only ſtrongly rooted in the Chriſtian faith, but alſo diligent in bringing forth the fruit of all Chriſtian virtues, ſome thirty fold, ſome ſixty, ſome a hundred.

After this, having now accompliſhed the great work for which he was ſent; and finding that the affection of this people for him was ſo great, that they

they would never willingly ſuffer him to return to his ſolitude: he withdrew himſelf from them privately by night, when they ſuſpected nothing of it: recommending them firſt, in the moſt earneſt manner he could, to the divine goodneſs; and making three times the ſign of the croſs over their town. 'Tis not to be imagined, what deſolation theſe good people were in, when coming to church the next morning they could not find their paſtor: and what diligences both they, and the biſhop (who was ſenſibly touched with their affliction) made uſe of, in ſearching after him; but all in vain; he had hid himſelf ſo well, that they could hear no tidings of him. So that the good prelate, to comfort, and aſſiſt them, went himſelf amongſt them; and after having greatly edified them with his preaching; ordained for them prieſts, deacons and lectors, for the miniſtry of the word, and the divine ſacraments; and for the care of their infant church. Which when Abraham had underſtood, he gave great thanks to God; and then ventured to return to his ancient cell: to which his ſheep often reſorted, in order to hear from him the words of life.

We paſs over other particulars of the virtues of this man of God; and the frequent aſſaults he underwent from the malice of the common enemy: who oftentimes viſibly appeared to him; but was always vanquiſhed by his humility, and by the confidence he had in our Lord; ſo that he was not able ſo much as to give him any fear. But there is one moſt remarkable paſſage of the life of this ſervant of God, which muſt not be omitted; which relates to the fall, the converſion and penance of his niece.

After the Saint had gone back to his cell, it happened that his brother, dying in the world, left an only daughter, named Mary, an orphan of ſeven years of age. This child was brought to her unkle, in his wilderneſs: who undertook to train her up to a reli-

a religious life: and placed her, for this purpoſe, in a cell, adjoining to his own, with a little window between the two, through which he inſtructed her. Here ſhe made ſuch good uſe of the leſſons, ſhe daily received from him; as to become a perfect model of piety, devotion, and penance: and continued in this happy and holy way for twenty years. But at the end of this time, a falſe religious, or rather a wolf in ſheeps clothing, under pretence of coming, to be edified by the converſation of her unkle, found means to ſpeak to her, and to tempt her to ſin: and ceaſed not, till ſhe was ſo unhappy, as to quit her cell, and yield to the temptation. The horrour and remorſe, that followed the crime, was ſo great, that it threw her into deſpair: ſo that inſtead of returning to her unkle, to confeſs her ſin, in order to riſe again after her fall, and to do penance; ſhe was reſolved to flee away from him: and accordingly went to a diſtant town, and there abandoned herſelf to a ſinful life.

The Saint having taken notice, that for the ſpace of two days, he had not heard her ſing pſalms, as ſhe was accuſtomed to do; called to her to know the meaning of it: and as no anſwer was returned; he preſently underſtood that ſhe was the dove, which he had ſeen in a viſion ſwallowed up by a dragon. His grief for the loſs of his dear child was inexpreſſible: he wept and prayed for her, without ceaſing: till at the end of two years, having heard of the place where ſhe was, and of the wicked courſe of life, to which ſhe had abandoned herſelf; he took a reſolution to go after the loſt ſheep, in order to bring her back to Chriſt's fold. To effect this, he procured by the means of a friend, a horſe, together with a ſoldiers habit, and a large cap or hat, which covered a good part of his face; and taking ſome money with him, went to the place where ſhe lived, which was an inn: where he ordered a great ſupper

to

to be prepared; told the hoſt, that he had heard much of the beauty of a young woman in his houſe, whoſe name was Mary, and deſired ſhe might ſup with him. After ſupper, when they were left alone, he took off his cap, and mingling tears with his words: 'My daughter, ſaid he (for ſo he uſed to 'call her) dont you know me? My child did not I 'bring you up? What has befallen you? Who is 'the murtherer, that has killed your ſoul? Where is 'that angelical habit, that you formerly wore? Where 'is that admirable purity? Where are thoſe tears, 'which you poured out in the preſence of God? 'Where thoſe watchings, employed in ſinging the 'divine praiſes? Where that holy auſterity, that 'made you take pleaſure in lying on the bare 'ground? Why did you not, after your firſt fall, 'come preſently to acquaint me with it; ſince I 'ſhould certainly have done penance for you, with 'my friend Ephrem (the writer of this life) who has 'been ever ſince under an unſpeakable affliction on 'your account? Why had you ſo little confidence in 'me? Alas! who is there without ſin, but God alone?'

In hearing theſe words, ſhe ſtood as one ſtruck dumb, with confuſion and horrour: and it was not without much difficulty, and many moving ſpeeches, in which he, ſtrongly repreſented to her the tender mercies of God, to repenting ſinners; and even promiſed to take all her ſins upon himſelf; that ſhe at length was determined to return with him to her cell. Then proſtrating herſelf at his feet, ſhe ſpent the remainder of the night in prayers and tears. At break of day, he bid her get upon his horſe; and ſo he conducted her back to his cell: ordering her to leave behind her, what money and goods ſhe had there; as holding them of the devil, whom ſhe had been ſerving. After her return, ſhe gave herſelf up, with ſo much ardour, to the exercices of a penitential life; and bewailed her ſins, day and night, with ſo deep

deep a ſenſe of ſorrow and contrition for them, joined with a lively confidence in the divine mercy, that God was pleaſed, within three years, to give her, as a token of his acceptance of her penitence, the grace of even working miracles, by reſtoring health to the diſeaſed, by her prayers. However ſhe continued her penitential courſe, with an incredible auſterity, for all the fifteen years, that ſhe lived after her converſion, and never ceaſed to lament her ſins, till God was pleaſed to take her to himſelf. At the hour of her death, a certain brightneſs was obſerved on her countenance, by all that were preſent; which gave occaſion to them all to glorify God.

As to St. Abraham, he paſſed to a better life, five years before her; after having ſpent fifty years, in ſerving God, with that admirable ſanctity, we have ſeen. As ſoon as it was known that he was dead, the whole city, in a manner, aſſembled about his cell: and as many as could procure for themſelves any part of his cloaths, carried them home with them, as precious relicks, which would bring a bleſſing along with them to their houſes: and we are aſſured by St. Ephrem, that the touch of them cured all diſeaſes upon the ſpot. St. Abraham is commemorated in the Roman martyrology, on the *16th* of *March:* but the Greeks celebrate his feſtival, jointly with St. Mary his niece on the *29th* of *October*.

Theodoret, in his Philotheus, gives us the life of another St. Abraham, a native of the city of Cyrus: who, from an anachoretical life, was called forth by divine inſpiration, to the converſion of the inhabitants of a certain town on mount Libanus: which having happily effected, by his zeal and charity; after three years ſtay amongſt them, he returned to his ſolitude. Where the ſaintly life he led, and the general eſteem all men had of his virtues, and of his great talents, for the winning of ſouls to God, determined

mined ſuperiors to ſend him, with the epiſcopal character, to the city of Carræ (or Haran) in Meſopotamia: which as yet had not received the faith of Chriſt, but was given up to the worſhip of devils. And God gave that bleſſing to the labours and preaching of his ſervant, backed by his continual prayer, and the wonderful ſanctity and auſterity of his life; that this people alſo, by his means, was brought over to Chriſt. He flouriſhed in the fourth century.

ST. JOHN of Egypt.

From Rufinus's lives of the fathers, chap. 1. Palladius, historia Lauſiaca, chap. 43, and Caſſian. L. 4. Inſtitut. chap. 23, 24, 25.

AMONGST all the Saints of the Egyptian deſarts, there is none, except St. Antony, whoſe name is ſo illuſtrious in church-hiſtory, and in the writings of the holy fathers, as that of St. John of Lycopolis (ſo called from the place, near which he dwelt in the hither Thebais) who in his days, was not only greatly renowned, for his extraordinary ſanctity and miracles; but conſulted alſo as an oracle, from all parts far and near, for his eminent ſpirit of prophecy; and that not only by perſons of an inferiour rank, but even by the great Theodoſius the emperour himſelf: to whom amongſt other things he foretold his glorious victories over the mighty armies of the two uſurpers, Maximus, and Eugenius. This Saint was born about the year 305; and was brought up at firſt to the carpenter's trade. But when grown up he withdrew himſelf wholly from the world, and put himſelf under an ancient religious man; to whom he rendered all kind of ſervice, with ſo much diligence and humility, that the good old father was quite in admiration at his virtue. However to make a trial of him, whether his virtue was built upon a ſolid foundation, or no; he often enjoined him things ſeemingly abſurd, and withal very difficult, or even altogether impoſſible: all which the humble diſciple immediately took in hand, and endeavoured to accompliſh, with a wonderful faith, ſimplicity and perſeverance; without ſo much as once allowing himſelf a thought of the unreaſonableneſs, or impoſſibility of the injunction: but believing all things poſſible to obedience; and looking upon the ordinance

ordinance of his ſuperior, as the commandment of God himſelf. Caſſian relates to this purpoſe, how the old father, one day, fixing a dry ſtick of wood into the ground, bid his diſciple water that tree twice every day: which he, with his uſual punctuality in matter of obedience, conſtantly performed, for the ſpace of a whole twelvemonth; whether he was ſick or well; or whatſoever other occupation required his attention: though he was obliged to go two miles at each time, to fetch the water: till at the end of the year, the old father aſked him, if the tree had taken root as yet, or no? And he ſimply anſwering, that he did not know: the father pulled the ſtick out of the ground, and bid him water it no longer.

After the death of his maſter, he employed about five years, in different monaſteries, in the exercices of a religious life: and then being about forty years of age, he retired all alone to a ſteep mountain, about two miles diſtant from the city of Lycopolis; and there he choſe for the place of his abode, a hollow rock of difficult acceſs; in which, he made three rooms, or partitions, one of which ſerved him for his oratory, where he prayed, another for his work-room, and the third for divers other uſes. The entry of this cavern he ſtopped up in ſuch a manner, that for the fifty years he lived there, he neither went out himſelf at any time, nor did any one ever come in within his encloſure: he only converſed, through a window, on certain days, with ſuch as came to be edified by his heavenly diſcourſes; or to ſeek counſel, or comfort, or the remedy of their diſeaſes from him. For the lodging and entertaining of ſuch as came to him from remote places, he permitted a dwelling to be built near to his grotto: where ſome ſervants of God, who had put themſelves under his conduct, took care of theſe ſtrangers. But as for women, none were ſuffered, upon any

account whatſoever, to come near him. For five days of the ſeven, his whole converſation was with God: on ſaturdays, and ſundays, he let himſelf be ſeen, thro' his window, by ſuch as came to viſit him: and after having prayed with them, he entertained them with excellent leſſons out of the word of God, according to the exigences of their ſouls; he reſolved their doubts, comforted them in their afflictions and pains of ſpirit, and encouraged them to fervour, and to perſeverance, in the love and ſervice of God. His words were full of a heavenly wiſdom, which he acquired by his continual converſation with God: for the more he withdrew himſelf from the things of the earth, the more the Spirit of God approached to him, with his heavenly light: ſo that he not only was endowed with a clear underſtanding of things preſent, but alſo with ſo perfect a knowledge, and foreſight of things to come, that few or none of the Saints, ſince the Apoſtles, have been found to have excelled, or even to have equalled him, in this ſpirit of prophecy. He often declared to thoſe that came to viſit him, the moſt ſecret thoughts of their hearts; and gave them wholeſome corrections in private, for their ſins, which he could not know but by revelation: he often foretold publick calamities; and warned the people againſt the ſins, by which they were about to draw down ſuch judgments from God upon their heads: and on many other important occaſions, relating to the publick welfare, he both gave directions, to them that were in power, what they were to do, and punctually foretold the ſucceſs. He was alſo illuſtrious for innumerable miracles: though to avoid oſtentation, he was not willing that the diſeaſed ſhould be brought to his cell, to be cured; but rather choſe to ſend them ſome oil, which he had bleſſed; which never failed to heal them, of all their diſeaſes.

Palladius

Palladius relates, how he himſelf took a journey of eighteen days, from mount Nitria, to the neighbourhood of Lycopolis, on purpoſe to viſit this Saint: and that he told him, as ſoon as he ſaw him, from what monaſtery he was come: that a little after, the governor of the province coming in, and the Saint having entertained him for ſome time in private upon the affairs of his ſoul; when the governor was gone, he let Palladius know, what had paſſed in the mean time in his thoughts. He told him alſo what temptations he lay under, of quitting his ſolitude, and of returning into his own country, under the ſpecious pretexts of comforting his aged father, and of inducing his brother and his ſiſter to embrace a religious life: aſſuring him that this was needleſs, for that they had both of them already renounced the world; and that his father would live ſeven years longer. He added that he (Palladius) ſhould come one day to be a biſhop; and ſhould afterwards meet with great troubles and afflictions. All which came to paſs, when Palladius, after ſome time, going into Paleſtine for change of air, and from thence into Bithynia, was there made biſhop of Helenopolis; and had no ſmall ſhare in the perſecution raiſed againſt St. John Chryſoſtome, being himſelf alſo expelled from his ſea on that occaſion.

Rufinus alſo with ſix others, his companions, went in like manner from Jeruſalem to viſit this great Saint, not long before his happy death. At their firſt coming, when according to cuſtom, they were about to join with him in prayer, and then to receive his benediction: he aſked, if there were not ſome one amongſt them, that was in holy orders? They anſwered, no. But he looked on them one by one; and then pointing to the youngeſt of the company, he ſaid this man is a deacon. And ſo indeed he was, though he deſired to conceal it, and only one of the company knew of it. He therefore continued to deny

it: upon which the Saint took hold of his hand, and kiſſed it, ſaying: 'My ſon, take care not to diſown the grace you have received, from God; leſt that which is good ſhould be an occaſion, of your falling into that which is evil, by telling a lye, for the ſake of humility. An untruth muſt never be told, not even under the pretext of good; nor upon any account whatſoever: for no lye can proceed from God, but always comes from evil, as our Saviour himſelf teaches us.' The deacon received this charitable correction with a reſpectful ſilence. After which, they all joined together in prayer: and as ſoon as they had finiſhed, one of the company, who was grievouſly tormented with a tertian ague, humbly entreated the Saint to cure him. He told him, that he deſired to be delivered from that, which was ſent him for his greater good: for that ſickneſſes, and other ſuch like chaſtiſements greatly ſerve to purify the ſoul. However he bleſſed ſome oil, and gave it him: with which he was ſuddenly, and perfectly healed. The man of God gave orders, ſays Rufinus, for our entertainment, according to the ſtricteſt rules of humanity and hoſpitality: taking much care for us, whilſt he took none at all for himſelf. For he never eat till after evenſong; and then but in a very ſmall quantity; and never any thing which had come near the fire. This was his perpetual faſt; which he ſtill obſerved, tho' he was now ninety years of age.

After they had refreſhed their bodies, by the entertainment, the Saint had ordered for them; they returned again to him, to receive from him the food of their ſouls. He aſked them, from what place they came, and what was the motive of their journey? They anſwered, that they came from Jeruſalem; with a deſire to be edified, by ſeeing with their own eyes what they had heard ſo much of. Upon this he told them, with a chearful ſerenity of countenance,

tenance, which proceeded from the inward joy and peace of his heart; that he wondered they ſhould take ſo much pains, and ſhould ſuffer the fatigues of ſo long a journey, merely to ſee him, a poor frail imperfect mortal; in whom there was nothing worthy of any man's ſeeking after, or admiring: for even ſuppoſing they had conceived an opinion that they might be edified, by what they ſhould ſee in him, or hear from his mouth; yet how inconſiderable would all this be, in compariſon with what they might learn any day, without going abroad for it, from the prophets and apoſtles, or rather from the Spirit of God in the holy Scriptures. However, ſeeing they were come ſo far, through a deſire to hear ſomething from him; he began, to make them a moſt divine exhortation, ſet down at large by Rufinus: in which after warning them againſt the danger, of taking occaſion of vain-glory, from this their journey, or from any thing they ſhould ſee or hear from any of the ſervants of God; either by thinking better of themſelves on this account, or by ſeeking to be thought better of by others, for having ſeen or heard theſe things: he proceeds to declare to them, how pernicious an evil pride and vain-glory is; which not only robs us of all the fruit, and of the reward of all our good works; but is capable of even caſting headlong the ſoul, that ſeems to herſelf to be already got up to the top of the hill of religious perfection, in an inſtant down the precipice, that leads to the bottomleſs pit; as it did Satan and his angels. Of this he gives them a dreadful example, which had happened lately in that very deſart, of a ſolitary, who dwelt there in a cavern by himſelf, and led a very auſtere life, labouring with his own hands for his living, and paſſing both days and nights in prayer; who after having attained to an eminent degree of virtue; ſuffering himſelf to be pufft up with pride and vanity, and a con-

ceit of his own ſtrength, fell an eaſy prey to the enemy; who aſſuming the ſhape of a woman in diſtreſs, and being admitted by him into his cave, excited in his heart impure thoughts and criminal deſires: to which when he had conſented, and was ſeeking to put them in execution; the phantom vaniſhed away, with a moſt hideous noiſe; but a multitude of devils was heard in the place, with a lowd laughter, mocking and inſulting over him. The wretch was ſo caſt down, and confounded at this ſhameful fall, that giving up all thoughts of labouring to riſe again, and to repair, by penance and humility, the fault into which his pride had betrayed him, he fell into the deep gulph of deſpair: and returning into the world, he gave himſelf up to all manner of impurities: induſtriouſly avoiding the meeting or converſing with any holy perſons, who by their wholeſome admonitions might ſeek to reclaim and convert him.

In the ſequel of his diſcourſe, the Saint inculcates the neceſſity of keeping alſo a ſtrict guard upon our heart, and our thoughts; in order to hinder any paſſion, or diſorderly affection of the will, or any vain deſire, of any thing, which is not according to God, from taking root in the heart: for from theſe roots preſently ſpring up a thouſand diſtractions, to the great prejudice of our attention and devotion in prayer, and of the purity of the ſoul. So that it is not enough, ſays he, 'to have renounced in words, 'the world, and all the works of Satan the prince of 'the world; nor even to have left our goods, our 'lands and all we poſſeſſed in the world: We muſt 'alſo renounce our own imperfections, and all vain 'pleaſures, and *unprofitable and hurtful deſires*, which 'as the apoſtle tells us, 1 Tim. vi. 9. *drown men in de-'ſtruction and perdition.* For without renouncing 'theſe things, we never renounce in effect the devil 'and all his works: ſince 'tis by the means of theſe 'the devil enters into our heart, and takes poſſeſſion

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'of it. Theſe diſorderly affections hold a correſpon-
'dence with this mortal enemy: they proceed from
'him, and they open the door of the ſoul to him.
'So that 'tis no wonder that ſuch ſouls as theſe, are
'never at reſt, but always in trouble and commo-
'tion; ſince they always carry about with them ſo
'wretched a gueſt, to whom they have given ad-
'mittance, by their paſſions and vices. On the
'other hand, he that has renounced the world *indeed*;
'that is to ſay, who has retrenched all his vices and
'paſſions, and baniſhed far from his ſoul all diſor-
'derly affections to ſin; ſo as to leave no gate open,
'by which the devil may enter into him: he who
'repreſſes his anger, who reſiſts and overcomes all
'irregular motions to evil, who avoids all lying,
'who abhors envy, who not only ſpeaks no evil of
'any man, but does not even allow himſelf the li-
'berty of thinking any evil of any one; and who
'always conſiders the goods and evils of his neigh-
'bour as his own; and behaves accordingly on every
'occaſion: ſuch a one as this opens the gate of his
'ſoul to the Holy Spirit; who comes in, and fills it
'with his light, and with thoſe admirable fruits of
'*charity*, *joy*, *peace*, *patience*, &c. which are produced
'in the ſoul by this heavenly Comforter.' Where-
fore the Saint proceeds to recommend, in a particu-
lar manner, to all that deſire to be religious indeed,
to labour, to acquire that perfect purity, both of con-
ſcience and of heart, which may enable them to offer
up to our Lord perfect and pure prayer; and ſuch
as may introduce them to a certain familiarity with
his divine Majeſty, and with his holy Angels; and to
ſuch a happy union of love; as that they may ſay
with St. Paul Rom. viii 38, 39. *That neither death,
nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor
things preſent, nor things to come----nor any other crea-
ture ſhall be able to ſeparate them from the love of God,
which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* And he further

adds, that the great means to attain to this perfect purity, which is ſo pleaſing to God, is the retrenching, by the virtue of mortification, all ſorts of vanities, inordinate affections, and ſenſual delights, even in little things; and walking reſolutely in the narrow way of ſelf-denial and penance: with which, if we ſhall join the love of ſolitude, of ſilence and recollection of ſpirit, we ſhall eaſily arrive at all perfection; and even begin to enjoy a kind of heaven upon earth.

With theſe and ſuch like heavenly diſcourſes the Saint entertained his gueſts: and after three days ſent them away, giving them his bleſſing, and telling them at parting; that on that very day the news was brought to Alexandria, of the victory which the emperor Theodoſius had obtained over the tyrant Eugenius. But, ſaid he, that good emperor ſhall not long ſurvive this victory, but ſhall die a natural death. All which they ſoon after found to be true. The man of God himſelf did not out-live that year. For the ſpace of three days before his death, he let no man ſee him; and on the fourth day, being on his knees in prayer, he breathed out his pure ſoul into the hands of his Creator; whom ſhe went to enjoy for a happy eternity.

Palladius relates of him, as having learnt it from his own mouth; that for all thoſe years he had lived in that cavern, he had never ſeen any one woman; he had never ſeen any one piece of money; he had never ſeen any man eating, nor had any man ever ſeen him either eat or drink.

But we muſt not here omit a very remarkable hiſtory, relating to this Saint, which is not only atteſted by Rufinus and Palladius, but alſo by St. Auguſtine (L. *de curâ pro mortuis*, C. 17.) as what he had learnt from thoſe, who had been informed by the very parties themſelves, to whom it happened. A certain tribune or colonel came to the Saint to beg of him

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to allow his wife to ſee him: for ſhe had taken a long and dangerous journey, out of the extream deſire ſhe had of viſiting him, and ſeeing him. The man of God anſwered, that he never ſaw, nor admitted of viſits from any women. But as the colonel ſtill preſſed him, affirming that it would coſt his wife her life, through the greatneſs of her affliction, if ſhe were not admitted to ſee him; the Saint bid him go, and aſſure his wife, ſhe ſhould ſee him that very night, without giving herſelf the trouble of either coming to him, or ſo much as going out of her own bedchamber. Accordingly that night, the man of God appeared to her in a viſion in her ſleep, and ſaid to her: 'O woman, great is thy faith, which 'has obliged me to come hither, to ſatisfy thy re-'queſt. However I muſt warn thee, not to deſire 'any more to ſee the mortal and earthly viſage of 'the ſervants of God, but rather to contemplate, with 'the eyes of the ſpirit, their lives and other actions: '*for the fleſh profiteth nothing; but 'tis the ſpirit that 'giveth life.* Know this alſo, that I not in quality of 'a Saint, or of a prophet, as thou imagineſt, but 'only in conſideration of your faith, have prayed 'to our Lord for you: and he has been pleaſed to 'grant to thee the cure of all the corporal diſeaſes, 'which thou laboureſt under: and henceforward 'both thou and thy huſband ſhall enjoy good health; 'and all your houſe ſhall be bleſſed. But take care, 'you never forget theſe benefits of God; and that 'you live always in the fear of the Lord, and re-'quire no more for your worldly livelihood, than 'the appointments due to your poſte. Content thy-'ſelf then with having ſeen me in thy ſleep, and de-'ſire no more.' When the woman awaked, ſhe related to her huſband the whole viſion, together with the habit of the Saint, and all the lineaments of his face; which, to his great aſtoniſhment, all perfectly agreed. Upon which he returned, on the next day, to

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the man of God, to give him thanks: who preſently, as ſoon as he ſaw him, told him: 'behold I 'have fulfilled what I promiſed, depart then in 'peace, and may the bleſſing of God go along with 'you both.'

St. John of Egypt is celebrated in the Roman Martyrology on the ſeventeenth of March.

ST.

ST. ARSENIUS.

From the third and fifth book of the remarkable actions and ſayings of the ancient fathers, publiſhed by Roſweidus.

ST. Arſenius was a nobleman, in great favour with the emperor Theodoſius, who committed to him the care of the education of his two ſons Arcadius and Honorius, in quality both of their godfather, and their governor. In this eminent ſtation, he lived at court, the life of a courtier, in the midſt of honours, riches and pleaſures, till he was about forty years of age: when God was pleaſed to call him, from this worldly life, into the wilderneſs; there to ſeek, by flight, ſilence and repoſe, the ſalvation of his ſoul. For when he was one day at his prayers, earneſtly begging of our Lord to teach him, what he was to do to ſecure his eternal ſalvation: he heard a voice, that anſwered him, 'Arſenius, flee the company of men, and thou ſhalt 'be ſaved.' Wherefore, in compliance with this heavenly call, he abandoned at once all his ſecular glory, for the love of Chriſt; and quitting all that he ſeemed to poſſeſs in the world, retired into the deſart of Scete, in order to dedicate there the remainder of his days to the love and ſervice of his Maker, in ſolitude and prayer, labour and penance. Here again, when he was repeating the ſame prayer, he heard the like voice again, ſaying to him: 'Arſenius, flee, be ſilent, and be quiet *(fuge, tace, quieſce)* theſe are the principles of ſalvation, or the 'firſt things to be done in order to ſalvation. *Hæc ſunt principia ſalutis.*'

To fulfil this repeated injunction of fleeing, from the company of men, he choſe to have his cell at a great diſtance from the other ſolitaries; and very rarely

rarely admitted of any visits from them. Even when he went to church (which was thirteen leagues off his habitation) he used to place himself behind one of the pillars, in order to be as much as possible out of sight, so as neither to see, nor to be seen. Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, went one day to visit him, with some others in his company; and desired of him, to make some discourse to the company, for their spiritual edification. The Saint asked them, whether they were all disposed to observe, and to put in practice what he should say to them? Yes, very willingly, said they. Why then, said he, I beg of you, that in what place soever you hear of Arsenius, you will be pleased to let him be alone, and never to come near him. Another time same the patriarch, having a desire to visit him, sent to know, if he would admit of his visit. Arsenius answered, that if he came alone, he should open his door to him: but if he brought any others with him, he would seek out another place, and would stay there no longer: so that Theophilus, for fear of driving him away, refrained from visiting him. The abbot Mark, asked him one day, why he kept at this distance from men, and shunned the conversation of all the other solitaries? He answered: 'God knows 'how dearly I love them all. But I cannot be at 'the same time both with him, and with them. For 'whereas the Angels, tho' their number be almost 'infinite, yet have all but one will; 'tis quite other-'wise with men, whose dispositions and wills are 'very different. Therefore I cannot think of lea-'ving God, to converse with men.'

As to the spending of his time in this solitude, it was divided between working and prayer: or rather his whole life in the wilderness was one continual prayer; for even when he was sitting at his work, and making baskets, which was his daily employment, his soul was ever attentive to God in prayer,

prayer, and forever bewailing his ſins; inſomuch that he was obliged to have always a handkerchief in his boſom, by reaſon of the floods of penitential tears, which flowed continually from his eyes. As for the nights, he generally ſpent them, as we learn from his diſciple Daniel, in watching and prayer: only towards the morning, when nature could hold out no longer, he uſed to ſuffer ſleep, which he called his *naughty ſervant*, to cloſe his eyes: but after a very ſhort repoſe, which he took ſitting, he roſe up again to his accuſtomed exercices. The ſame diſciple related, that on ſaturday evenings, the ſitting ſun uſually left him at his prayers, with his hands extended towards heaven; and that he continued praying in this ſame poſture, till the ſun riſing the next morning, came beating upon his eyes. In order to renew his fervour in his ſpiritual exercices, he would be often ſaying to himſelf: *Arſenius, Arſenius, to what end didſt thou leave the world, and come hither?* He uſed alſo often to ſay, that whenever he had been talking, he had always found matter to repent of, but had never regretted his having kept ſilence. He was alſo a great lover of holy poverty. The other ſolitaries ſaid of him: that as no one was more richly clad than Arſenius, whilſt he lived at court; ſo none of the inhabitants of the deſart, was more meanly and poorly clad than he was, after his retiring from the world. His poverty was ſo great, that in a certain ſickneſs of his, having occaſion for a trifle of money, to procure ſome little neceſſaries, he was obliged to receive it in alms: upon which he cried out: 'I give thee thanks, O my God, that 'thou haſt made me worthy to be thus reduced to 'the neceſſity of aſking an alms in thy name.' After he had lived for many years in the wilderneſs, a kinſman of his, a ſenator, dying, left him by his laſt will, a conſiderable eſtate. This will was brought to the Saint, by a proper officer, in his ſolitude:

which

which diſpleaſed him ſo much, that he would have torn it in pieces, had not the officer flung himſelf at his feet, declaring that it would coſt him his life, if the will were deſtroyed. Upon this Arſenius gave back the will, ſaying. 'How is it poſſible this man 'ſhould make me his heir by his will, ſince he, as 'it appears, died but a little while ago, and I have 'been dead ſo many years?'

As to the method of his faſtings, and his auſterities in this kind; it was hard to know them in particular, by reaſon of his keeping himſelf ſo much to himſelf. Only his diſciple Daniel ſaid, that for all the time he knew him, they laid him in, but a very ſlender proviſion, for his whole year's ſuſtenance; and yet that he managed this ſo well, as not only to make it ſuffice for himſelf, but alſo to impart ſome of it to his diſciples, whenever they came to ſee him. The ſame diſciple alſo took notice, that when he was ſitting at his work, making baſkets, according to his cuſtom, of the leaves of palm-trees; and the water, in which he was obliged to moiſten, and ſoften theſe leaves, began to corrupt, he would never change it, or fling it away; but if there were any need of freſh water, he would pour it in upon that which was already corrupted; that ſo it might always continue to yield a diſagreeable ſmell. The brethren aſked him one day, why he would not ſuffer that corrupt water to be flung away, ſince it infected his whole cell with its ſtench? 'O, ſaid he, 'I was uſed when I lived in the world, to gratify 'myſelf with the moſt agreeable perfumes: and 'therefore 'tis no more than juſt, that I ſhould now, 'for all the time that remains of my life, in puniſh-'ment of my former ſenſuality, ſupport this ſtench; 'in hopes that at the laſt day, God will deliver me 'from the inſupportable ſtench of hell; and not con-'demn my ſoul with that of the rich man, who had 'paſſed his days in feaſting and delights.'

But

But nothing was more remarkable in this Saint, than his extraordinary humility, which made him ſo induſtrious in keeping himſelf out of ſight, and in concealing every thing, that might procure him the applauſe or eſteem of men. He was learned in the human ſciences, before he quitted the world, and was a perfect maſter, both of the Greek and Latin: and after his retiring into the wilderneſs, he received great lights from God, for underſtanding matters of the ſpirit; ſo that no one was more knowing than he in the holy ſcriptures; or could explain better the moſt difficult paſſages of them: yet he would never ſpeak of theſe matters, at leaſt by his own choice; nor ſhew at any time his knowledge of them; but rather choſe to conſult, and to hearken to the moſt illiterate of the brethren, provided he were truly humble. Being aſked one day, why he, being ſo learned a man, ſought inſtruction and counſel from a certain ſolitary, who was quite deſtitute of all human literature. He replied: 'Tis true, whilſt I 'was in the world, I acquired ſome knowledge in 'the ſciences of the world (and in the Greek and 'Latin tongue) but ſince I have left the world; I 'have not yet been able to learn even the A, B, C, 'of the true ſcience of the Saints, of which this 'ignorant ruſtick is maſter:' ſuch were his humble ſentiments of himſelf.

After he had ſpent forty years in the deſart of Scete, the Mazices, a babarous people of Libya, made an irruption on that ſide: where they maſſacred St. Moſes, and other ſolitaries, and forced all the reſt from their cells. Upon this occaſion, Arſenius was obliged to change his earthly reſidence, but not the true dwelling place, where his heart was fixed. He went therefore to a place called Trohe, not far from the ancient Babylon of Egypt (now Cairo) and there he continued his uſual courſe of life for ten years: till freſh irruptions of the barbarians drove

him

him thence. From Trohe, he went to Canopus, in the lower Egypt, which is not far diſtant from Alexandria: where being too much diſturbed, with the importunity of viſits from that great metropolis, he would ſtay no longer than three years; and then returned again to Trohe; where he ſpent the two laſt years of his mortal pilgrimage. When his end approached, he told his diſciples, that he deſired they ſhould bury him privately, no matter how, only taking care that he ſhould be remembred in the offering of the holy ſacrifice. They that were preſent at his death, ſeeing him, ſaid to him: 'Father, 'why do you weep? Are you alſo like the reſt afraid 'to die? Yes, ſaid he, very much: and this is no 'new fear, but a fear that has ſtuck cloſe to me 'ever ſince I firſt came into the deſart.' He departed to our Lord in a good old age, being ninety five years old: of which he had ſpent fifty five in the deſart, in the exercices of a religious life. St. Pemen ſeeing him expire, cried out: 'O happy 'Arſenius, for having wept, and mourned for your-'ſelf ſo much in this world! For they that do not 'mourn in this life, ſhall mourn for all eternity in the 'next.' It is alſo recorded of the patriarch Theophilus, that when he was at the point of death, he ſaid, 'O how happy were you, O Arſenius, who 'had this laſt hour continually before your eyes!'

The name of St. Arſenius, is recorded in the Roman martyrology on the nineteenth of July.

ST.

St. NILAMMON.

From Sozomenus *an ancient church hiſtorian*, L. 8. C. 19.

NILAMMON was a holy anchoret, who had made himſelf a little cell, near Geres, a ſmall city of Egypt, in the neighbourhood of Peluſium; and lived there for many years in admirable ſanctity. When the biſhop of that city died, the clergy and people, who had conceived a high opinion of the eminent virtues of this ſervant of God, deſired to have him to ſucceed in the biſhop's ſee. But whatſoever inſtances they made, Nilammon's humility ſtill ſtood off; and he ſtill refuſed to ſubmit his ſhoulders to a charge, which even an Angel might have reaſon to fear. And as he apprehended, leſt they ſhould uſe violence, he ſtopt up the door of his cell, and fenced it with ſtones; that they might not be able to come at him.

Whilſt theſe things were doing, it happened that Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, coming by ſea from Conſtantinople (where he had been too much engaged in the unjuſt depoſing of St. John Chryſoſtome) was driven by a ſtorm upon the coaſt of Geres. The people therefore took this opportunity of the preſence of the patriarch, to entreat him to oblige Nilammon, to accept of the biſhoprick. Whereupon Theophilus going to his cell, uſed his beſt endeavours to prevail upon him to accept of epiſcopal conſecration; and continued to preſs him ſo cloſe, that Nilammon finding the patriarch would not hear any thing that he could alledge to excuſe himſelf, deſired at leaſt one day's reſpite, to ſet his affairs in order: telling him, that on the following day he might do with him as he pleaſed.

The patriarch failed not to come on the following day, and all the people with him: and then challen-

ging the promiſe of the Saint, he deſired him to open his door, that they might proceed to his conſecration. Nilammon propoſed, that ſome time ſhould be allowed him for prayer, before his conſecration. Theophilus applauded the propoſition, and betook himſelf alſo to prayer. Nilammon prayed with ſo much fervour, that he breathed out his ſoul in prayer into the hands of his Creator. In the mean time the patriarch, and the reſt that were without, after having allowed him, as they thought, a competent time for his devotion, began to be impatient, and to call upon him to open his door: but finding that a good part of the day paſſed in this manner, and that no anſwer was returned to them; they forced their way into his cell; and to their great ſurprize found him dead. They buried him with great honour, and erected a church over his monument, where they celebrated his feſtival, amongſt the Saints.

He died anno 403: and his name is recorded on the ſixth day of January in the Roman martyrology.

St. SIMEON Stylites.

From Theodoret in his Philotheus. chap. 26. *and Antonius diſciple of the Saint, in his life.*

THOUGH there were during the life time of St. Simeon Stylites, almoſt as many eye witneſſes of his extraordinary courſe of life, and of the innumerable prodigies which God wrought by him, as there were men in all the Eaſtern regions, not to ſay in the whole known world; yet the great Theodoret, having undertaken, whilſt the Saint was yet alive, to tranſmit, by writing, to poſterity a faithful account of this wonder of the world, was afraid, leſt he ſhould ſeem to ſucceeding ages, to have delivered to them a fable rather than a true hiſtory. But the divine providence, which raiſed up this Saint, in ſo extraordinary a manner, in order to ſhew forth to all the world the power of his grace; to rouſe up by ſo great an example the drooping ſpirits of lukewarm Chriſtians; and to enlighten the eyes, and touch the hearts of thouſands of infidels and ſinners: was pleaſed that this his wonderful life ſhould not only be perfectly well known, at the time he lived, thro' the whole extent of the Roman empire, and all the Eaſtern nations, which bordered upon the empire; but for the edification of poſterity ſhould alſo be written, by ſuch authors, and in ſo authentic a manner, that we may ſafely ſay there is no fact in hiſtory better atteſted.

This Saint was born towards the latter end of the fourth century, at a place called Siſan, upon the confines of Syria and Cilicia. In his tender years, he was employed by his parents, in feeding their ſheep in the country; ſo that he ſeems to have had but little opportunity of frequenting the church, or hearing the word of God. But a great ſnow falling

one day, obliged him to leave the ſheep under ſhelter at home; and gave him leiſure to go to church. He entered therefore into the houſe of God, extremely touched, and quite penetrated with the fear of God: and he gave great attention to the divine leſſons, which were there read, out of the epiſtles of St. Paul, and out of the goſpel: particularly he took notice of thoſe words of the ſermon upon the mount; *bleſſed are they that mourn:* and *wo be to you that laugh:* and *bleſſed are the clean of heart*, &c. and addreſſing himſelf to an old man, who was one of the congregation, he deſired to be further informed, what he was to do, and what courſe of life to follow, that he might live up to theſe heavenly leſſons, and ſave his ſoul? This good old man recommended to him a retired and ſolitary life, as moſt proper to eſtabliſh his ſoul in ſolid virtue: and ſpoke ſo movingly, and effectually to him; that this holy ſeed ſunk deep into his heart, and began to produce its fruit there. The firſt thing he did upon this was to retire to a ſolitary place, where there was a church of the Martyrs, and there to proſtrate himſelf flat upon the ground, and with all the fervour of his ſoul to beg of him, who deſires that all men ſhould be ſaved, to vouchſafe to direct him in the way of perfect piety, in order to his eternal ſalvation. He continued a long time in prayer, till he fell a ſleep, and in his ſleep had the following viſion. He ſeemed to himſelf (as he related to Theodoret) to be digging into the ground, in order to lay the foundation of a building; and that he heard a voice, which bid him dig ſtill deeper. He did ſo; and then would have reſted himſelf; but the voice a ſecond time bid him go deeper ſtill. And the ſame thing having been repeated four times, one after another, at length it was ſaid to him, that it was deep enough, and that he had now nothing to do but to build.

Ariſing

Ariſing from the ground, he went ſtrait to a neighbouring monaſtery, which was governed by a holy abbot, called Timothy. Here he proſtrated himſelf before the gate, employing three whole days and nights in faſting and prayer, without being taken notice of. At length the abbot coming out, he caſt himſelf at his feet, and begged of him, with many tears, to take pity of a poor ſoul, that was in danger of periſhing, and that deſired to learn to ſerve God. The abbot encouraged him, and taking him by the hand, led him into the monaſtery; and recommended to the brethren, to teach him the rule of the houſe: which he quickly learnt, and practiſed with great perfection, (being then only thirteen years old) and even ſurpaſſed all the reſt in humility, and in the exerciſes of faſting and penance. Here alſo, in four months, he learnt the whole pſalter; and took great delight in meditating on, and feeding his ſoul with theſe heavenly hymns. In this monaſtery he remained two years, giving a perfect pattern of a conſummate virtue and piety, in ſo tender an age. In the mean time his parents were ſeeking after him, and bewailing him as loſt, whilſt he with much more reaſon was rejoicing, as having now happily found both himſelf, and his God.

From this religious houſe, for greater improvement in the ſcience of the Saints, he went to another monaſtery, founded at a place called Teleda, near Antioch, by the diſciples of the Saints Ammian and Euſebius; and governed at this time by the abbot Heliodorus. And here he remained in all for about nine or ten years. There were in this monaſtery about eighty monks: but Simeon out did them all in the exercices of a religious life: and whereas all the reſt were accuſtomed to eat once a day, or at leaſt once in two days; he faſted the whole week; ſo as to eat nothing all the week, only one meal on the Lord's day. In this monaſtery it was, that

having procured a rope or cord, made of the leaves of palm-trees, and ſo hard and rough, that it could ſcarce be even handled; he privately girt himſelf with it, under his habit, next to his ſkin, ſo cloſe, that it made its way into the fleſh, till it was almoſt covered, and the fleſh itſelf was perfectly corrupted with it. He concealed what he ſuffered on this occaſion, till the religious found out, how the caſe ſtood with him; and the abbot inſiſted upon his parting with the cord, which with much ado, and not without putting him to great tortures, was diſengaged from the fleſh.

After he was cured, the abbot diſmiſſed him from the monaſtery; fearing leſt any of the other religious might ſuffer prejudice, by aiming at an imitation of his extraordinary auſterities. Simeon on this occaſion, going into a more remote and loneſome part of the mountain, found there a dry well, into which he went down, and there ſung the praiſes of God. Here he remained for ſeveral days, without either eating or drinking, till Heliodorus, repenting that he had ſent the Saint away, in that manner, deſired two of the brethren to ſeek after him, and to bring him back again. Theſe by the direction of ſome ſhepherds (who had heard him ſinging) found him out in his well, and with the help of a rope brought him up, and conducted him back to the monaſtery. Where he continued for a ſhort time: and then he took himſelf to an abandoned hut, near a village called Telaniſſus, ſituated at the foot of that mountain, on the top of which he afterwards finiſhed his courſe.

In this hut, he lived ſhut up during three years: and here our Lord firſt inſpired him with a deſire of faſting all the forty days of lent, without taking any manner of corporal nouriſhment, during the whole time. Upon this, he deſired Baſſus, who was the eccleſiaſtical ſuperior in that diſtrict, to wall up the door

door of his cell, for that lent; and ſo to leave him quite to himſelf, without any thing for his food. Baſſus remonſtrated to him, that this would be undertaking a thing, that was above the ſtrength of man: and that to deſtroy himſelf (which would be the conſequence of ſuch a faſt) would be no act of virtue; but on the contrary a grievous crime. Leave with me then, father, ſaith the Saint, ten loaves of bread, and a pitcher of water; that I may make uſe of them, in caſe I find it neceſſary. Baſſus accordingly furniſhed the loaves and the water; and then ſtopping up the door, went his way; and did not return till the forty days were ended. When Eaſter was come, he made haſte to viſit the ſervant of God; carrying with him the bleſſed ſacrament: but when he had removed the ſtones, and opened the door, he found the Saint lying extended on the floor, like one dead, without ſpeech or motion; and the ten loaves, and the water quite untouched. However as he found there was life in him, he dipped a ſponge in the water, and with it moiſtened his mouth: and then gave him the holy communion. With this heavenly food he was raiſed up again; and was further enabled to recover his ſtrength, by taking in a little nouriſhment from the juice of herbs and pulſe. This faſt of forty days, during lent, without either eating or drinking any thing at all, from this time forward, he conſtantly obſerved every year, for the remainder of his life: which time and cuſtom at length made eaſy to him. For in the firſt beginning, after paſſing the firſt part of lent, ſtanding and praiſing God, he was obliged, as he grew weaker, to ſit himſelf down, and in this poſture to perform the divine office; till in the latter end, his weakneſs forced him to lye down at his length, ſtretched out as one half dead: and upon this account, in the firſt years of his living, and ſtanding upon the pillar, he was conſtrained for the latter part of his forty days

faſt, to ſupport himſelf, by the help of a poſte, faſtened to his pillar, for this purpoſe; to which he cauſed himſelf to be tied, as he grew weaker. But for many years before his death, God had ſtrengthened him ſo far, that he ſtood not in need of any of theſe helps: but paſſed the whole time of lent, with all the chearfulneſs imaginable, without any manner of nouriſhment, or human ſupport.

From his hut, near Telaniſſus, the Saint went up to the top of the neighbouring mountain; and there made for himſelf an incloſure of ſtones, without any covering, in which he remained for ſome years: taking no other nouriſhment but boiled lentils, and water; and by the means of a chain, one end of which he faſtened to his right leg, and the other to a great ſtone, confining himſelf to ſuch narrow limits, that he could not go beyond the length of his chain. But if he was chained in body, his ſoul was at liberty, and was continually flying up towards her God, by mental prayer and contemplation. This chain, upon the remonſtrances of Melecius, a chorepiſcopus under the patriarch of Antioch, he ſuffered to be taken away. At which time, as Theodoret learnt from Melecius himſelf, after the ſmith had filed off the iron, when they came to take away the leather, which the Saint had put next to his ſkin, to hinder the chain from entring into his fleſh, as the cord had done before; they found in it about twenty large puneezes or bugs: which this prelate thought worthy of particular notice, to ſhew the wonderful patience of the Saint, who had quietly ſuffered for ſo long a time, the troubleſome bites of theſe infects, when he might with ſo much eaſe have rid himſelf of them, at once, by deſtroying them.

And now the reputation of Simeon's ſanctity being ſpread far and near, great multitudes began to reſort to him: and many were the miraculous graces,

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in all kinds, which were obtained by his prayers and bleſſing: inſomuch that all men crowded about him; and ſought to come near, and to touch his garments; believing that thoſe coarſe ſkins, with which he was clad, imparted a benediction. This was ſo troubleſome, and ſo inſupportable to the Saint, that upon this occaſion he firſt conceived the thought of living upon a pillar, to be out of the reach of the crowd. Which was no doubt a particular inſpiration of God, who deſigned by the means of this his extraordinary manner of living, to draw great numbers of infidels to the faith, and of Chriſtians to a virtuous and penitential life.

He began this new way of life, never before attempted by any one, about the year of Chriſt 423, and continued it for about ſeven and thirty years, that is, till his death. The pillar, which he cauſed to be made at firſt, was but ſix cubits, that is three yards high: this he afterwards exchanged for one of twelve cubits; and then again after ſome time, for one of twenty two cubits: but that, on which he finiſhed his courſe, was of the hight of thirty ſix cubits; that is, of eighteen yards. Its diameter, as we learn from Evagrius, was at the moſt but of two cubits, or one yard: ſo that he could not, if he would, lye down upon it at his length. In the mean time, he had no covering, or ſhelter, to defend him, either from the rigour of the winter, or from the heats of the ſummer, or from the violence of the rain or wind, or other injuries of the air. His ordinary poſture, was ſtanding, night and day, without any other ſupport but the ſtrength of his faith, and the divine grace. In his prayer, he very frequently bowed himſelf down to adore his God; and that in ſuch a manner, as to bring his forehead almoſt to his toes; his great faſts (in never eating but once a week, and then next to nothing) having reduced his body to that condition, which made this eaſy to him. Theſe adorations he repeated ſo often

often; that as we learn from Theodoret, one day, when this holy prelate was himſelf preſent, one of his attendants counted of them to the number of 1244. He often remained for a good ſpace of time, in his prayer, bowed down in this manner (with his forehead upon the pillar) and this 'tis likely might alſo be the poſture, in which he ſlept: for certain it is, that he ſome-times ſlept, though fame had publiſhed, that he lived without either ſleeping or eating. However, he certainly ſlept very little; and generally paſſed almoſt all the night in prayer: and ſo he did the beſt part of the day; even till the ninth hour; that is till about three in the afternoon, when he made his exhortations to the people. But on the eves, or vigils of the feſtivals, he not only paſſed the whole night in prayer; but ſtood all the time on his feet, with his hands ſtretched out, and extended towards heaven.

The other holy inhabitants of the oriental deſarts, hearing of this new and extraordinary kind of life, which the Saint had undertaken; having conſulted together, ſent a deputation to him, as we learn from the hiſtorian Evagrius L. 1. chap 13, to aſk him the meaning of his taking to this unheard of courſe of life, and leaving the common road, which had been beaten, by all the Saints, and the holy fathers, who were gone before him? and to order him immediately to come down from his pillar. Giving nevertheleſs inſtructions to their deputy, that if Simeon ſhould ſhew himſelf ready to obey, he ſhould let him alone, and encourage him to go on with his undertaking; as ſhewing by his ready obedience that what he did, was not by any caprice, but by divine inſpiration: but that if he refuſed to obey, he ſhould oblige him to come down by force. The deputy had no ſooner delivered his commiſſion; but the Saint, without making the leaſt reply or demur, preſently diſpoſed himſelf to obey, and to come down.

down. Whereupon the deputy told him, to continue where he was: for his undertaking was from God.

This the Almighty himſelf ſufficiently manifeſted, by the many miraculous gifts and graces he beſtowed upon him: of which there were in his life time millions of witneſſes. For an incredible multitude from all parts of the world, was continually coming to him, to ſee this wonder of the world, to hear his divine inſtructions, and to ſeek remedies through him for all their evils. 'For you ſhall not only ſee there, 'ſays Theodoret, the inhabitants of our province '(Syria) but alſo the Iſmaelites (the Saracens of Ara-'bia) the Perſians, the Armenians, the Iberians, 'the Ethiopians, and other nations, which are ſtill 'more remote than theſe. There come alſo people 'to him from the furtheſt parts of the Weſt: from 'Spain, from Britain, from Gaul (France) and 'other neighbouring provinces. And as to Italy, it 'is needleſs to ſay any thing; we are aſſured that his 'name is ſo illuſtrious in Rome, that they even ſet 'up little pictures of him in their ſhops and porches, 'for a protection and defence.' So far Theodoret, writing, whilſt the Saint was yet alive, the things of which he himſelf was witneſs. Who alſo gives ſeveral inſtances of the ſpirit of prophecy, which he had experienced in this Saint; and of great and evident miracles, wrought before his own eyes. He adds, that great numbers of infidels, by occaſion of this Saint, were daily brought over to the faith of Chriſt. 'One may ſee, ſays he, the Iberians, Ar-'menians and Perſians, coming to receive baptiſm. 'And as to the Saracens, they come to him in 'large companies of two or three hundreds, or even 'of a thouſand at a time; abjuring with a loud voice 'their falſe religion; treading their idols under 'their feet, in the preſence of this bright light of 'Chriſtianity, embracing the divine myſteries of our 'holy

'holy faith; and receiving from the ſacred mouth 'of this man of God, the rules of life, which they 'are to follow for the time to come. I myſelf have 'been witneſs of all this.'

As to the reſt, the ſame learned godly prelate gives an ample teſtimony to the unparalleled modeſty and humility of this great ſervant of God; and to his wonderful meekneſs, and affability to perſons of all conditions, how poor or mean ſoever they were, according to the world. But nothing was ſo admirable in him as that invincible patience, conſtancy, courage and alacrity, with which he underwent, for ſuch a number of years, the voluntary auſterities of ſo ſevere and rigid a courſe of penance: which for a great part of the time was rendered ſtill more difficult and inſupportable, by a dreadful ulcer in his left foot, which he had contracted by his continual ſtanding, and which ſent forth corrupted blood and vermin. And yet with all his faſting, his watching, his prayer, and his other auſterities, he ceaſed not daily to labour, for the ſalvation of the ſouls of his neighbours, by delivering to them from his pillar, twice a day, excellent exhortations, to take off their hearts from this wretched earth; to ſet always before their eyes that everlaſting kingdom, which we hope for hereafter; to tremble at the threats of eternal torments; to deſpiſe all that paſſes with time, and ever to aſpire after the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. He was alſo ever ready, to give ghoſtly counſel to all that came to him, to hearken to their demands, to cure their diſeaſes; to accommodate their differences *&c*; and not only to attend to the private neceſſities of particulars, but much more to every occaſion, in which he might be of ſervice to the common good of the church: dictating ſometimes letters, to this end, to prelates, to governors, and even to the emperour himſelf. Thus he uſually employed his time from the third hour after

ter mid-day till the ſunſet: and then he gave his benediction to the people, which they received with great reverence; and ſo he bid adieu to men, to converſe with his God alone.

At length the time being come, in which God had decreed to crown the patience and labours of his ſervant, with eternal glory; upon a friday (anno Chriſti 460) being bowed down, according to his cuſtom, in prayer, he gave up his happy ſoul into the hands of him, whom he had ſo conſtantly and ſo faithfully ſerved. His body, after his death, remained in the ſame poſture from friday till ſunday in the afternoon; no one in the mean time knowing that he was dead: becauſe it was no unuſual thing for the Saint to paſs whole days in prayer, ſo as to omit his ordinary times of ſpeaking to the people. But on ſunday in the afternoon, his diſciple Antonius going up the pillar, by a ladder, found that he was dead: and immediately gave private notice of it to the patriarch of Antioch, and to the governor of the province; in order to prevent any tumult, that might be raiſed by the people, contending about his body. The patriarch Martyrius, accompanied with ſix other biſhops, and eſcorted by the governor, with 6000 ſoldiers, came without delay; and taking the body of the Saint down from the pillar, carried it away with great ſolemnity, to Antioch, and enterred it there. And our Lord was pleaſed to work many great miracles, by his interceſſion, as well at his monument in that city, as at his pillar, where he lived and died. His name is recorded in the Roman martyrology, on the fifth of January.

There were divers other Saints of the name of Simeon, who are alſo celebrated in church hiſtory. Amongſt the reſt St. *Simeon the ancient*, whoſe life is alſo given by Theodoret in his Philotheus, (of whom he relates that he had the very lions of the deſart at his beck) St. *Simeon Stilites* the younger, who alſo paſ-

ſed

ſed his life upon a pillar; and is recorded in the Roman martyrology, September the third: St. *Simeon*, ſurnamed *Salus*, whoſe name is regiſtred in the ſame martyrology, July the firſt, with the following elogium. '*At Emeſa, St. Simeon confeſſor, furnamed 'Salus, who became a fool for Chriſt: but his profound 'wiſdom God declared by great miracles.*'

St. EUTHYMIUS.

From his life, by Cyrillus, *a faithful cotemporary writer.*

EUTHYMIUS, ſurnamed *the great*, was born at Melitene in the leſſer Armenia, of noble and vertuous parents, anno 377. He was a child of prayer, his parents having obtained him of God, after a long barrenneſs, by the interceſſion of St. Polyeuctus the martyr; and having dedicated him to God from his mothers womb. At the age of three years, he was put in the hands of the holy biſhop Otreus; and from that time was brought up, like another Samuel, in the temple of God, in the exercices of an early piety, and, in the ſtudy of the holy ſcriptures: on which he conſtantly meditated; even in thoſe leiſure hours, which others of his age ſpend in their diverſions. He was ordained lector, when yet a boy; and gradually promoted to the higher orders; giving great edification in them all, till he was thought worthy of the prieſtly functions: and then had the conduct and direction, by commiſſion from the biſhop, of all the monaſteries of the dioceſe of Melitene. In the mean time, it was his cuſtom, to retire as often as he could, from all other buſineſs, to attend to God and himſelf, in ſolitude and ſilence: (to which he had a great attraction even from his childhood) to ſpend a great part of his time in prayer, in the churches of the martyrs; and to make an annual retreat, all alone by himſelf, during the whole time of lent, in a deſart mountain, at ſome diſtance from the city. His love for ſolitude and retirement, ſtill encreaſing upon him, at length determined him to withdraw himſelf for good and all from his own country, his friends, and his acquaintance, and to go into the Holy land. Where after viſiting

viſiting, and reverencing the places, conſecrated by the myſteries of our redemption; he choſe for his abode a ſolitary place, about ſix miles from Jeruſalem, called Pharan: in the neighbourhood of a *Laura*, or reſidence of divers religious men, living in ſeparate cells, at ſome diſtance from one another; but meeting for their devotions in the ſame church: as the hermites of Camaldulum do now.

This ſolitude was quite agreeable to his inclinations to retirement and ſilence: and therefore he made himſelf a cell here; employing his hands in making mats, or in other manual labours, (that he might live without being burdenſome to any one, and might be able to relieve ſuch as were in want) but having his heart all the while on God; and making it his whole ſtudy to pleaſe him. Here divine providence brought him to be acquainted with a holy ſolitary, named Theoctiſtus, who had his cell not far off, and who followed the ſame manner of life. And the likeneſs of their diſpoſitions, united them ſo cloſely together, in the bands of a moſt perfect friendſhip and charity, that they ſeemed to have but one heart and one ſoul. Amongſt other exercices of piety, theſe two ſervants of God, never failed to make every year a ſpiritual retreat, which they began after the Epiphany, and continued till Palm-Sunday. At this time, they quitted their cells, and retired into the wilderneſs of Cutila: and there being wholly ſeparated from all converſation with mortals, they ſpent their whole time with God, in prayer and contemplation: till, palm-ſunday being come, they returned home again, laden with the ſpiritual riches, which they had acquired in their retreat, to offer them up to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, at the feſtival of his paſſion and reſurrection.

Euthymius had practiſed this for ſome years; when he and Theoctiſtus, going according to their cuſtom

cuſtom into the wilderneſs, were conducted by providence to the banks of a rapid torrent: where they found a large cavern of very difficult acceſs; which they embraced as a place aſſigned them by heaven for their habitation: and here they lived for ſome time, quite remote from all human ſociety; and having no other food, but the wild herbs of the deſart. But as the Almighty deſigned to bring about the ſalvation of many ſouls, by the means of theſe his ſervants, he did not ſuffer the place of their abode to be long unknown. They were firſt diſcovered by certain ſhepherds; who publiſhed to the neighbouring village, the place and manner of their living. This brought them viſits from the inhabitants; who willingly furniſhed them with the neceſſaries for their temporal life, and received from them in exchange moſt wholeſome inſtructions, and exhortations in order to their eternal life.

It was not long after this before the monks of Pharan alſo came to viſit them: and the ſanctity of their diſcourſe, and of their life, moved two of them, Marinus and Lucas, (who were afterwards great Saints) and by degrees many others, from other places, to put themſelves under their conduct. Inſomuch that after ſome time, they built a monaſtery in the ſame place, and turned their cavern into a church. The direction and ſuperintendency of this monaſtery, Euthymius committed to Theoctiſtus; whilſt he himſelf enjoyed the ſweets of his beloved ſilence and repoſe, ſeated with Mary at the feet of our Lord: yet ſo, as often to interrupt his contemplation, by labouring to purify the ſouls of his brethren from their ſtains, and like a ſkilfull phyſician, to apply proper remedies for the cure of all their evils. For the religious came daily to him, to diſcover their moſt ſecret thoughts to him; and to receive from him the rules and leſſons of a ſpiritual

life: and Theoctiſtus for his part did nothing without his advice, and concurrence.

He ſpoke to them all, with the affection of a father; and conſtantly inculcated to them: 'That 'they, who by their religious profeſſion had renounced the world, and the things of the world; 'ſhould make it their principal ſtudy to exerciſe 'themſelves in humility, and obedience; and to 'diveſt themſelves of their own will: that they 'ſhould have always the hour of their death before 'their eyes; ſhould tremble at the apprehenſion of 'a miſerable eternity; and continually aſpire, with 'moſt ardent deſires, after the kingdom of heaven. 'That they ſhould alſo employ themſelves, without 'ceaſing, in manual labours; more eſpecially if they 'are of an age, in which the paſſions of youth ſtand 'in need of being kept under; for in that caſe the 'body muſt be brought down by labour, that it 'may be obliged to ſubmit to the ſpirit: and that 'they ſhould ever remember both the example and 'the doctrine of St. Paul; and that he ſays, 1 Theſ. 'iii. 10 *If any man will not work, neither let him eat.* '&c.' He alſo very much recommended to them ſilence; particularly in the church, and at their meals: and he could not endure to ſee any of the young religious, by a motion of their own will, affect to appear more auſtere than the reſt in their faſting: for he deſired, that according to the precept of the Goſpel, they ſhould hide their good works, rather than make a ſhow of them: and he preferred that kind of abſtinence, as the moſt commendable of all, which at every meal, and upon every occaſion, reſtrains the appetite from taking its fill, and always retrenches, without oſtentation, ſome part of what it craves. He added, that they ſhould always be upon their guard, to reſiſt all irregular deſires; to carry their arms always about with them, to defend themſelves againſt their inviſible enemies; and that they

they ſhould meditate day and night upon the law of God.

Whilſt Euthymius was in this monaſtery, Aſpebet, governor of a Canton of the Saracens, brought his ſon Terebon, who had quite loſt the uſe of one half of his body, by a dead palſy, to be cured by the Saint. The religious, ſeeing a multitude of theſe barbarians coming towards their monaſtery, were all in a fright: but Theoctiſtus encouraged them (for Euthymius was in his ſpiritual exercices) and going forth to meet the band, he aſked them what they wanted? Aſpebet anſwered, we want to ſee Euthymius. He is in his retirement, ſaid Theoctiſtus, and will neither ſee, nor ſpeak to any one till ſaturday. Then Aſpebet ſhewed him his ſon (whoſe whole right ſide was withered up, ſo as to appear quite dead) and made a ſign to the youth, to tell him his caſe: who related, how having been ſtruck with this illneſs in Perſia, where his father was then, in the ſervice of king Iſdegerdes, they had employed there, in order to his cure, not only all the natural remedies of phyſick, but alſo the ſecrets of magick, but to no effect. And that ſince he came with his father into Arabia, they had again tried new experiments upon him, but all to no purpoſe. Wherefore finding that there was no ſuccour to be had from man, he had turned his thoughts towards the great God, that made man; and had prayed to him one night, with great fervour, to reſtore him to his health; promiſing in that caſe, that he would dedicate himſelf to his ſervice, and become a Chriſtian. And that after this prayer he had fallen aſleep, and ſeen in a dream a venerable monk, who ſaid his name was Euthymius; that he lived upon the bank of the torrent, in the wilderneſs, near the road that leads to Jericho, at about ten miles diſtance from Jeruſalem: and that if he deſired to be cured, and was diſpoſed to fulfil his promiſe, he ſhould come to

him, and that God would reſtore him again to his health.

Theoctiſtus having heard this, went in, and related the whole to Euthymius: and both of them concluding that the viſion muſt have come from God; the Saint interrupted his retreat, upon this occaſion, and going out, prayed over the young man; and made the ſign of the croſs upon him; at which, he was in an inſtant perfectly cured; to the great aſtoniſhment of all the barbarians there preſent, who were all converted upon the ſpot; and after proper inſtructions, received baptiſm. Aſpebet took the name of Peter, and made ſuch progreſs in Chriſtian piety, as to be afterwards ordained biſhop of the Saracens; and Maris his brother-in-law, quitted the world, for good and all, to become a diſciple of St. Euthymius.

The fame of this great miracle, being ſpread through all the country, brought ſuch numbers from all parts to viſit the Saint, and to ſeek from him the cure of their maladies; which they uſually obtained by his prayers: that partly to fly from the danger of vain-glory; and partly to enjoy more freely his beloved ſolitude; taking with him a holy man, whoſe name was Domitian, he privately withdrew himſelf from his monaſtery into the deſart of Ruban, that lies more to the ſouth, near the lake of Sodom. Here for ſome time he fixt his abode in a high mountain, on the top of which he found a well, and ſome ancient ruins, with which he built a chappel, and an altar; living all the while on the wild herbs, he found there. From hence he went to the deſart of Ziph, (where David formerly had concealed himſelf, when he was perſecuted by Saul) which place pleaſed him much. But it was not long before the inhabitants of a neighbouring town, called Ariſtobulias, found him out; by occaſion of a young man, poſſeſſed by an evil ſpirit, who had often the name,

name of Euthymius in his mouth; and was wonderfully delivered, as ſoon as he was brought within ſight of the Saint. This miracle brought many diſciples to him: for whom the people of the neighbourhood built a monaſtery; which the Saint for ſome time directed, in the ways of religious perfection. But his love of ſolitude induced him to quit this monaſtery alſo, where he found himſelf much importuned, and diſtracted wtih viſits from all parts; and to ſeek out, with his companion Domitian, a place more agreeable to his inclinations to retirement and ſilence: which he met with in a cavern, not far from his former monaſtery. Theoctiſtus, whom he had left ſuperior there, with all the reſt of the brethren, would gladly have had him return again to them: but the moſt they could obtain of him, was that he would come to them every Lord's day, and be preſent at their aſſemblies.

Aſpebet, now Peter, hearing where the Saint was, brought to him a great number of the Saracens, who were deſirous of being Chriſtians; whom Euthymius inſtructed and baptized. And as theſe new converts were willing to be ſtill under his direction; he appointed them a place not far off, for the building themſelves a church, and other dwellings: where he often viſited them, and preached the word of life to them: till finding them ſufficiently grounded in Chriſtian piety; he procured them a prieſt and ſome deacons for the care of their church, and the adminiſtration of the ſacraments. And as many more were daily coming, and the number of his converts became very conſiderable; he propoſed to Juvenal, the patriarch of Jeruſalem, to give them alſo a biſhop, who might have the charge of all the Saracens of Paleſtine: the patriarch readily complied with the Saint's propoſition; and ordained Aſpebet, or Peter, to this function: by whoſe means God daily added many others to his church.

Hitherto Euthymius, through his love of ſolitude, had addreſſed all ſuch, as reſorted to him, in order to embrace a religious life, to the monaſtery of Theoctiſtus: till he was admoniſhed in a viſion, to build a *laura*, and a church, for the receiving ſuch, as deſired to put themſelves under his conduct; which was ſoon filled with a multitude of religious ſouls. The number of the monks, joined with the barrenneſs of the place, made it difficult to find ſufficient proviſions in that wilderneſs: but the divine providence never forſook his ſervants, whoſe whole care was to pleaſe him. It happened one day, that four hundred Armenians, in returning from Jeruſalem towards the Jordan, miſſed their way, and came down to the laura of Euthymius. The Saint ſeeing them, immediately gave orders, that they ſhould be hoſpitably entertained. Domitian repreſented to him, that the community was reduced to ſo great ſtreights, that they had not bread enough for the brethren, not even for one meal. The Saint, full of confidence in his God, bid him go to the bakehouſe, and ſee what he ſhould find there He obeyed, and found the room quite full of bread, and of other proviſions, in ſuch a quantity, that he could hardly thruſt the door open.

God alſo favoured his ſervant with the gift of propheſy: of which my author ſets down ſeveral remarkable inſtances. And as to the manner of life, which he here followed; he aſſures us, from the teſtimony of thoſe, that were the beſt acquainted with him, that he was never ſeen to eat, but on the ſaturday, or the ſunday; that he never broke ſilence of his own accord, nor ſpoke at all, but when neceſſity obliged him to it; that he never laid himſelf down to ſleep, but ſlept ſitting, *&c.* He adds, that he was a cloſe imitator of the great St. Arſenius: and was highly delighted with hearing, from the religious, who came out of Egypt, the particulars of his life

life and converſation. He had always before him, thoſe words of his: *Arſenius, Arſenius, on what account didſt thou leave the world?* And he ſtrove to copy out in his own practice, all the great examples that Saint had given, of humility, recollection, poverty of ſpirit, love of ſilence and ſolitude, perpetual compunction of heart, and profuſion of tears in the ſight of God; and his continual watching, faſting, and prayer.

There happened in thoſe days, ſo great a drought in Paleſtine, that it ſeemed, according to the expreſſion of the ſcripture, as if the heavens were of braſs, and the earth of iron. The ciſterns and receptacles, which they had made for water, were filled with nothing but duſt: and the whole country was reduced to the utmoſt extremity, for want of rain. As the evil encreaſed daily, an infinite multitude of the people of the towns and villages round about, carrying croſſes in their hands, and ſinging *Kyrie eleiſon*, to implore the divine mercy, came to the Saint; on the very day, when he was going out, according to his cuſtom, to make his retreat in the wilderneſs, as a preparation for Eaſter. The ſight of their diſtreſs, moved him to compaſſion: and he ſpoke to them as follows. 'My children, as for 'my part, I am but a wretched ſinner, and ſtand 'more in need than any other of the mercy of God; 'eſpecially at this time, in which we ſee his wrath 'thus enkindled againſt ſinners: and therefore I am 'not ſo bold, as to dare to lift up my eyes to him: 'as I know that he ſends theſe afflictions, when he 'pleaſes; and that, as no one can ſhut, when he is 'pleaſed to open, ſo no one can open when he is 'pleaſed to ſhut. Our ſins have ſeparated us from 'him: we have diſfigured his image; we have de'filed his temple: we have ſuffered ourſelves to be 'carried away by our paſſions: envy and avarice 'reign amongſt us; and our hatred for one another

'renders us hateful to him. But as he is all good-'neſs; and his mercy has no bounds; let us all 'proſtrate ourſelves before his face, and pray to him 'from the very bottom of our hearts; and I make 'no doubt, but that he will forgive us; and ſhew us 'his fatherly love, by the ſeaſonable aid, he will 'ſend us: for as David ſays: *The Lord is near to all 'them that call on him.*' When he had ſpoke thus, the people all cried out, begging that he would pray for them: whereupon after preſcribing to them all, to join in prayer to the Lord, with the greateſt fervour they were capable of, he went in with his religious into their oratory; and lying proſtrate on the ground, with many tears implored the divine mercy. When behold on a ſudden a wind aroſe, the heavens were darkened with thick clouds, and there fell immediately ſuch an abundance of rain, as quite ſoked the whole earth: and was followed by the moſt fruitful year, that ever had been known in Paleſtine, in the memory of man.

The Saint had an extraordinary zeal, for the maintaining the purity of the Catholick faith: inſomuch, that he, who was otherwiſe the meekeſt of men, could not endure the obſtinate abettors of condemned errors. In his days, a wicked hereſy was broached by Eutyches, a monk of Conſtantinople, who denied the diſtinction of the divine and human nature in Chriſt. His impious doctrine was condemned by the great council of Chalcedon. But there were not wanting many children of iniquity, who inſtead of ſubmitting themſelves to this great authority, ſpread abroad many ſlanders againſt that council, and miſrepreſentations of the Catholick doctrine; by which they alienated the minds of many from the faith. One of the chiefeſt of theſe was Theodoſius, a monk of Paleſtine, who under a religious habit covered a diabolical ſpirit; and by his wicked inſinuations, and downright calumnies, prejudiced the mind of the

the empreſs Eudocia (who was at that time in Paleſtine) againſt the council: and by the means of her intereſt, and the great liberalities ſhe exerciſed to the religious, gained the greateſt part of them alſo over to the Eutychian faction: excepting the diſciples of St. Euthymius. And not content with this, he intruded himſelf into the patriarchal ſee of Jeruſalem; declared an open war againſt all that oppoſed themſelves to his impiety; baniſhed the Orthodox biſhops from their ſees, and even embrewd his hands in the blood of ſome of them. In the mean time Euthymius oppoſed himſelf as a wall for the houſe of Iſrael; and conſtantly refuſed to have any manner of communication with this falſe patriarch. And as he was continually plying him with meſſages, in order to bring him over to his ſide, by reaſon of the neighbourhood of the laura of the Saint to the city of Jeruſalem; he aſſembled his diſciples, and having powerfully exhorted them to a conſtancy in the Catholick faith, he withdrew into the deſart of Ruban; and he remained there, till the uſurper was obliged to leave Jeruſalem, and the patriarch Juvenal was reſtored to his ſee.

In the mean time, he brought back to the church, an excellent anchoret, whoſe name was Geraſimus; who had been alſo impoſed upon, with many others, and drawn in to be an abettor of the impious Theodoſius. Till hearing of the eminent ſanctity of Euthymius, he went to confer with him in the wilderneſs of Ruban, and by his heavenly diſcourſes was fully reclaimed from his error; and conceived a very great regret, for having ſuffered himſelf to be deceived: for which he did ſevere penance. His example was followed by four other anchorets, who in like manner renounced the communion of Theodoſius. And as for Geraſimus, he afterwards built a laura, and a monaſtery, near the Jordan, where he trained up many ſouls, in great perfection; and both

both lived himſelf, and died, in ſuch extraordinary ſanctity, as to have his name enrolled amongſt the Saints. See the Roman martyrology, March the fifth.

And now the empreſs Eudocia, after having a long time ſtood out againſt the ſolicitations of her neareſt relations, began to open her eyes to the Catholick truth. For her inſtruction therein, ſhe ſent to St. Simeon Stylites, as one, to whom God imparted extraordinary lights, to direct ſouls in the way of ſalvation: and ſhe opened to him, by her meſſenger, the biſhop Anaſtaſius, the whole ſtate of her interior. That Saint encouraged her, to diſengage herſelf totally from the nets of Satan, in which her ſoul had been entangled, by the means of the impious Theodoſius: and for this purpoſe, he exhorted her to addreſs herſelf to St. Euthymius, and to receive from his mouth, the pure waters of life. She did ſo, and by his means, was reconciled to the Catholick church: and her example was followed by great numbers both of the religious, and of the laity. This princeſs, after having built a great many churches, monaſteries, and hoſpitals, had conceived a deſign of extending her beneficence alſo to the *laura* of St. Euthymius, which the Saint had founded in great poverty. But before ſhe had declared her mind to any one living, Euthymius, who by a divine light, often diſcovered the ſecrets of hearts, told her: 'Daughter, your departure out of this world, is 'near at hand. Wherefore inſtead of buſying your-'ſelf with all theſe cares, attend to your own interi-'our: and think of preparing yourſelf for your 'journey hence, rather than of ſetling revenues up-'on us: we want nothing elſe of you, but that you 'would remember us in your prayers.' The empreſs followed his advice, and ſome months after made a happy end.

Amongſt

Amongſt other favours, which our Lord did to his ſervant Euthymius, my author relates, from the teſtimony of the anchoret Cyriacus, who learnt it from two eye-witneſſes; that one day when the Saint was ſaying maſs, a bright fire was ſeen to come down upon his head, which encompaſſed both him, and his diſciple Domitian, and remained from the *Sanctus*, till after the communion. He was alſo often favoured with the viſion of Angels, at the time of his offering the holy ſacrifice: and when he diſtributed the holy communion, he ſaw in ſpirit the different diſpoſitions of the communicants; perceiving how the ſacred hoſt caſt rays of light upon ſome; and darkneſs upon others, who by being unworthy, received it to their own condemnation. The Saint was ſo touched with this kind of viſion, that he was perpetually inculcating to his religious, the neceſſity of keeping their conſcience always pure, that they might worthily approach to theſe divine myſteries: that *holy things, were for holy perſons:* and therefore if at any time, any of them found their conſcience charged with the guilt, either of hatred, or of the deſire of revenge, upon receiving an injury, or of envy, or of wrath, or of pride, or of ſpeaking evil of their neighbour, or of entertaining looſe thoughts, or criminal deſires; or of any other vice, they ſhould by no means preſume to approach to the divine table, till they had in a proper manner, expiated their ſins by penance.

And now the man of God, after having paſſed about ſixty-ſeven years in the deſarts of Paleſtine, which by this time he had peopled with a multitude of Saints; underſtood by divine revelation, that the time of his laying down his earthly tabernacle was at hand. It was his cuſtom, after the Octave of the Epiphany, to make his annual retreat, and to withdraw himſelf into the remoter parts of the wilderneſs; where he continued in ſpiritual exercices, till the

the holy week. Wherefore his disciples Elias and Martyrius (both of them afterwards, according to his prediction, patriarchs of Jerusalem) who were used to accompany him on this occasion, came to him on the octave of that festival, to ask him, if they were not to set out with him, on the following day? The Saint told them, he would spend that week with them at home, in the *laura*; but that on saturday at midnight he should leave them. He passed the vigil of the feast of St. Antony (Jan. 17) with them in prayer: and after the morning lauds, he told them, this was the last vigil, he should keep with them. Then having ordered all his religious to be assembled, he made them an excellent discourse: telling them, his hour was now at hand; and conjuring them, if they had any regard or affection for him, to shew it, by faithfully and constantly practising the lessons he had taught them. In particular, he recommended to them *charity* and *humility*, as the two principal ingredients of Christian perfection: telling them, that if all Christians were bound to exercise themselves in these virtues; much more they, who by their religious profession, had in a particular manner, consecrated themselves to Jesus Christ; to the end that being freed from all secular cares and affections, they might have no other solicitude but to please him. 'Labour then, said he, my brethren, with 'all your power, to keep both your bodies and 'minds ever chast: continue to praise and glorify 'God, all of you together: practise with all possible 'diligence the rule he has given us: do all that 'you can, to comfort the afflicted; and to fortify, 'by your exhortations and instructions, such a-'mongst the brethren, as lye under temptations; 'that they may not fall a prey to the enemy: let 'your gate be always open to hospitality; divide 'the little you have with the poor and indigent;

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'and the divine bounty will not fail to furniſh you 'with all that ſhall be needful for yourſelves.'

After having ſpoken to this effect, he aſked them, whom they deſired to have for their ſuperior, after his death? They all, with one voice, deſired it might be Domitian. That cannot be, ſaid the Saint, for he ſhall not ſurvive me above ſeven days. Whereupon they made choice of Elias: to whom the Saint earneſtly recommended the care of his flock. After this they retired, and Domitian alone remained with the Saint: who, after three days, departed to our Lord, at the preciſe time he had foretold: and his happy ſoul was ſeen at that very time, by St. Geraſimus, carried up by Angels towards her heavenly country. His individual companion Domitian, within ſeven days, took the ſame happy road; being invited on the eve of his death, in a viſion in his ſleep, by St. Euthymius, to come with him to the regions of light, and life everlaſting, where they ſhould both live together forever, in the kingdom of their Father. St. Euthymius has a place in the Roman martyrology on the twentieth of January.

St. THEODOSIUS Cenobiarcha.

From a cotemporary writer, publiſhed by Bollandus.

THEODOSIUS, ſurnamed *Cenobiarcha*, from the multitude of religious, whom he ruled and directed in a conventual life, was born near Ceſarea in Cappadocia, anno 423. He was educated by his parents in the fear of God; and from his tender years gave ſuch proofs of virtue and piety, that he was ordained lector, to read the holy ſcriptures to the faithful in the church. What he read to others ſunk into his own heart, and made a deep impreſſion there. Particularly he was much affected with thoſe words of God to Abraham, Gen. xii. as if they had been ſpoken to himſelf, *Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father's houſe*, &c. as alſo with that promiſe of our Lord in the Goſpel, of giving everlaſting life, to them that ſhould leave all things for the love of him: and by frequent meditation on theſe and ſuch like paſſages of holy writ, he was at length determined to follow God's call, and to forſake all things in this world, that he might more ſecurely find the kingdom of heaven.

In conſequence of this reſolution, he ſet out, to go and viſit the holy places at Jeruſalem: taking Antioch in his way; in the neigbourhood of which, St. Simeon Stylites was then living upon his pillar. Theodoſius went to ſee this Saint, deſirous to recommend himſelf to his prayers, and to receive his benediction. As ſoon as he was come near the pillar, Simeon cried out, *welcome Theodoſius, ſervant of God*; and preſently deſired he would come up, by a ladder, to him. And there, after mutual embraces, he foretold to him, by the Spirit of God, all that ſhould afterwards befall him: and in particular that he ſhould have the conduct of a numerous flock, and ſhould reſcue

reſcue, by the aſſiſtance of divine grace, many ſouls from the jaws of the infernal wolf. Theodoſius was confirmed in his good reſolution, by this conference with ſo great a Saint: and ſo continued his journey to Jeruſalem: where after reverencing the holy places, he went, and put himſelf under the direction of an eminent ſervant of God, called Longinus, who dwelt in a ſmall lodge by himſelf, in the tower of David. And partly under him, partly under Marinus and Lucas, diſciples of St. Euthymius, he learnt the true ſcience of the Saints, with ſuch perfection, as to become himſelf a moſt excellent maſter and teacher, both by word and example, of this heavenly diſcipline.

Some time after this he was moved, by divine inſpiration, to ſeek a more retired ſolitude; where he might lead an anachoretical life. For this purpoſe, withdrawing himſelf into the wilderneſs, he made choice of a cavern, which he found on the ſide of a mountain, for the place of his habitation, for the remainder of the days of his mortality: and he lived there, for the ſpace of thirty years, in a mortal body, as if he had been an immortal ſpirit; in the conſtant excercice of watching, faſting, and prayer; together with that continual recollection of thought, that fervour of ſpirit, that humility of heart, and that abundance of tears; which could not fail, to draw down plentifully upon him the graces and gifts of the Spirit of God. His only food all this time was dates, or pulſe moiſtened in cold water, or wild herbs, without any bread at all. He embraced labours, with as much ardour, as others do their pleaſures; and fled from pleaſures, as much as others do from labours. He deſired nothing ſo much as to live hidden from the eyes of men: but it was impoſſible for him to keep himſelf ſo concealed in his cavern, but that the bright light of his extraordinary ſanctity broke out, and caſting its rays far and near, invited

invited many to him; who were desirous to put themselves under his conduct, and to learn of him the secrets of religious perfection. He made difficulty at first of receiving any into his company: but his charity for the souls of his neighbours, prevailed over his love of solitude: and the great blessing God gave to his conduct and direction of souls, shewed that it was God's holy will he should be thus employed.

The number of his disciples in the beginning did not exceed six or seven, who all lived with him in his cavern. This number gradually encreased: and as they all made it their business to seek in the first place the kingdom of God, with all their power, the divine providence never failed to add to them the necessaries of this present life. One Easter eve, when the Saint had now twelve disciples with him in his cavern, it happened that they had nothing at all to eat; and what troubled them most of all was, that they had not even bread for the divine sacrifice. This they represented to their holy superiour, who being full of confidence in God, bid them nevertheless prepare the altar, for the celebrating mass on Easter-day. When behold about sunset, Providence sent a man to their cavern, with two mules, laden with bread and other provisions in such quantity, as abundantly sufficed them till whitsuntide. Another time, when they were reduced to the like streights, Providence sent them a supply, in a manner still more remarkable; which happened thus: A man was leading his horse, laden with provisions, to some other place: but when he came into the neigbourhood of the cavern, where the servants of God dwelt, he could not by any means make his horse go forward: so that conceiving there must be something supernatural in the case, he gave him the bridle, to go which way he list. The horse being left to himself, immediately, as if he were guided by an invisible hand,

hand, went ſtrait up to the cavern: where the maſter perceiving the diſtreſs of this holy community, relieved them very plentifully; and glorified God for having thus wonderfully made uſe of him, as the inſtrument of his divine goodneſs, for the feeding his ſervants.

But the number of the diſciples of the Saint (and amongſt them of perſons conſiderable for their birth, and fortune in the world) daily encreaſing; his cavern was by much too little for them: ſo that they prevailed upon him, tho' not without much difficulty, to conſent to the building a ſpacious monaſtery, and a church; hard by the cavern, in the very place appointed to him by heaven, by the ſign of the coals in his cenſar taking fire of themſelves. Here he received all that came to him: and as their number was very great, he was obliged afterwards to add ſeveral other buildings, as well for the ſpiritual, as for the corporal neceſſities, of the multitudes, which reſorted to him. No where was hoſpitality exerciſed with greater affection than in this monaſtery, or with more chearfulneſs and joy: for amongſt all the virtues of the Saint, his tender compaſſion and charity for his neighbours, and diligence in relieving all their neceſſities, ſeemed to claim the firſt place. All that were in diſtreſs were welcome to him: he even built ſeveral hoſpitals and infirmaries about his monaſtery: for the entertaining of them. And God was pleaſed more than once to teſtify, by miracle, his approbation of this extenſive charity of his ſervant. Thus in the time of a great famine, when an incredible multitude of people flockt to the monaſtery, upon a Palm-Sunday; and the religious, not having where with to feed ſo great a crowd, would have kept the gates ſhut; the Saint truſting in his God, bid them open the gates, and give them all to eat. And though the number was ſo great, as to fill every part of the houſe, yet by a miracle not unlike that wrought by our

Lord in feeding the 5000 in the deſart, they all eat and were filled; and there ſtill remained more bread than they had at firſt. The like to which happened alſo another time, upon the feaſt of the annunciation of the bleſſed Virgin.

As to the diſciples of our Saint, the number of thoſe, who put themſelves under his conduct, was ſo great, that my author aſſures us, that during the time of his ſuperiority, he buried with his own hands no fewer than ſix hundred and ninety three religious men, whom he had trained up to all ſanctity; and that his ſucceſſor St. Sophronius did as much for four hundred more; who both in life and death followed the ſame happy courſe. He adds that many illuſtrious biſhops and abbots were taken out of this monaſtery: that many others, who had been here brought up under our Saint, betook themſelves afterwards to an anachoretical life, in which they were eminent for holineſs: that many, who had followed the profeſſion of arms, quitted the ſervice of Ceſar, to enrol themſelves here amongſt the ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, and to learn of Theodoſius, his heavenly diſcipline: that many who enjoyed poſts of honour, and were eminent in the world; many, who were renowned for their learning, came alſo to our Saint, to take up under his direction the ſweet yoke of Chriſtian ſimplicity and humility, and to become his ſcholars, in the ſchool of truth, and in the ſtudy of the ſcience of the Saints. His conduct toward all that were under him, was ever regulated by a heavenly prudence; he accommodated his directions and preſcriptions, to the different exigences and diſpoſitions, as well as to the ſtrength of his diſciples. When any were faulty, inſtead of penances, he only uſed words of admonition, correction, and exhortation: but words, animated with that ſpirit, which made them penetrate into the very midſt of their ſouls. In theſe corrections, he had the ſecret of aſſociating in ſuch manner a wonderful meekneſs

and

and ſweetneſs, with a juſt ſeverity, as to make himſelf at once be both feared and loved. The leſſons of all virtues, which he gave to others, were inforced by his own practice. His converſation was always extremely edifying and inſtructive: his ſpirit always attentive to God; whether alone, or in company; or in whatſoever manner he was employed: he was always calm and even in his temper, and always the ſame: his greateſt delight was in reading the holy ſcriptures, which he made the ſubject of his perpetual meditation, day and night, even till the end of his life. Our Saint had not been brought up to any degree of ſecular learning: nor had ever ſtudied the rules of humane loquence: yet in the diſcourſes, which he made to his diſciples, he far excelled the greateſt orators, in the point of moving and exciting the affections, and inflaming the heart: becauſe his words did not proceed from human wiſdom; but from divine grace, and from the Spirit of God. He was a great admirer and imitator of St. Baſil: and in his words, and with his ſpirit, addreſſed himſelf often to his monks, to the following effect. 'I beſeech you, 'my brethren, by the charity of our Lord Jeſus 'Chriſt, who delivered himſelf up to death for our 'ſins; let us, once for all, be quite in earneſt, and 'ſeriouſly ſet about the buſineſs of ſaving our ſouls. 'Let us conceive a lively ſorrow, for having paſſed 'our time hitherto ſo unprofitably: let us now at 'leaſt begin to fight manfully in the ſervice of God, 'and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt; that we may be made 'partakers one day in their glory. Let us ſhake off 'this ſluggiſhneſs, and lazineſs, which makes us ſtill 'love to put off from day to day the labouring in 'good earneſt to advance in virtue. For if we let 'ourſelves be deceived by the enemy; and ſo be 'found void of good works here; we ſhall have no 'pretenſions hereafter to the joys of heaven; but 'ſhall lament in vain for having let ſlip the time and

'means of working out our ſalvation, when it ſhall 'not be in our power to recover them. The time 'of this life, and that of the life to come, are widely 'diſtant: the one is the time of penance, and the 'other of reward: the one is the time of labour, and 'the other of repoſe: the one is the time of ſuf- 'fering, and the other of conſolation. At preſent 'God is infinitely good to them that turn from their 'evil ways, and are converted to him: but then 'he ſhall be a juſt and inexorable judge, who will 'call us to a ſtrict account for all our thoughts, 'words and actions: he is patient now, but he ſhall 'be terrible then. How long then ſhall we delay to 'comply with, and to obey the voice of Jeſus Chriſt, 'who invites us to an eternal inheritance? What? 'ſhall we never awake out of this long and deep 'ſleep? Shall we not now at leaſt renounce our ill 'ſpent life; to embrace evangelical perfection? Ah! 'ſhall we not tremble at the thoughts of that 'dreadful day of the Lord; when he ſhall receive 'into his kingdom, thoſe whoſe good works ſhall place 'at his right hand; and ſhall condemn to eternal 'fire, thoſe who, being void of good works, ſhall be 'placed at his left? We ſay indeed that we deſire 'to go to heaven: but we don't labour in earneſt, 'about the means of acquiring and ſecuring to our- 'ſelves this eternal kingdom: but it is in vain for 'us, if we neglect to put in practice what our Lord 'has commanded us, to flatter ourſelves with the 'expectation of receiving from him that reward, 'and that glory, which thoſe only ſhall have, who 'ſhall fight generouſly until death againſt ſin.' So far the Saint, in the words of St. Baſil.

St. Theodoſius had alſo a great zeal for maintaining the Catholick faith, againſt all condemned hereſies. Of which he gave ſignal proofs, during the reign of the emperour Anaſtaſius, who was a great abetter of the Eutychian hereſy, condemned by the general

general council of Chalcedon. This prince, in hopes of drawing our Saint over to favour his impious tenets, ſent him a very conſiderable ſum of money; by way of an alms, as he pretended, for the relief of the poor, and the comfort of his religious, in their ſickneſſes. The Saint thought it not prudence, to give the emperor an offence, by refuſing his charity; though he apprehended an ill deſign, covered under this ſpecious pretence. Not long after, Anaſtaſius ſent to deſire of him a confeſſion of his faith, agreeable to the Eutychian hereſy. Theodoſius returned him an anſwer, in which inſtead of coming in to his meaſures, he declared himſelf ready to ſuffer a thouſand deaths, rather than to betray his conſcience, or conſent to hereſy. The emperor, though diſappointed, diſſembled his reſentment, and proceeded no further at that time. But not long after, he furiouſly attacked the Catholic faith, and raiſed a violent perſecution againſt the profeſſors of it. In this great neceſſity of the church, when the orthodox paſtors were either baniſhed from their churches; or intimidated into a ſilence, which gave great advantage to error; when the hereticks triumphed, and a great part of the people either joined with them, or were dubious what way to take: the Saint ſeeing the dreadful danger, to which the ſheep of Chriſt were expoſed, in the midſt of theſe wolves; fearleſs of the rage of the emperor, and of the violence of his officers and miniſters; went boldly into the great church of Jeruſalem, in the time of the divine ſervice, and going up to the tribune, from whence the holy Scriptures uſed to be read to the people, pronounced with a lowd voice an anathema againſt all that did not receive, and revere like the four Goſpels, the four general councils (of Nice, Conſtantinople, Epheſus and Chalcedon) in which the orthodox doctrine, with relation to the bleſſed Trinity, and to the Incarnation of the Son of God,

had been defined and declared, againſt the Arians, Macedonians, Neſtorians and Eutychians. This courageous profeſſion of his faith, in ſo publick and ſolemn a manner, made a wonderful impreſſion on the minds of the people, in favour of the Catholick religion: and ſtruck all that heard him with ſuch an aſtoniſhment, that none of the adverſaries, as he paſſed through the crowd, to go out of the church, durſt ſo much as open their mouths to ſpeak one word to him; much leſs offer to ſtop him. After this, taking with him ſome of his diſciples, and of the other holy inhabitants of the deſart, without loſs of time, he went about to all the neighbouring cities and towns; labouring to encourage, and to confirm the faithful, to inſtruct the ignorant, to reclaim thoſe that had gone aſtray; and to put a ſtop to the progreſs, which that wicked hereſy, backed by the power of the emperor, was daily making. This zeal of the Saint quickly drew upon him the indignation of his prince; who condemned him to a perpetual baniſhment: little thinking how ſoon the ſentence of death was going to be pronounced againſt himſelf by the king of kings. After the unhappy death of this perſecutor, Juſtin, who ſucceeded in the empire, immediately reſtored peace to the church, and recalled all the exiled biſhops to their own ſees; and the Saint from his baniſhment.

St. Theodoſius was alſo illuſtrious for his miracles: of which my author gives a very remarkable inſtance, in the caſe of a woman, ſuddenly cured of an inveterate cancer in her breaſt, by coming behind him in the church, and touching her breaſt with ſome part of his habit. He was alſo favoured with prophetick light: as appeared, when one day he ordered all the religious to be aſſembled, out of their uſual time; and when they aſked him the reaſon, he anſwered with tears: 'We muſt pray brethren, we muſt pray, 'for I ſee the wrath of God enkindled againſt the

'*Eaſt.*'

'*East*.' So they called the diſtrict of the patriarch of Antioch. Now many days did not paſs, before the news came, that at the very time he ſpoke thoſe words, the city of Antioch was quite deſtroyed by an earthquake.

The Saint, notwithſtanding the auſterity of his life, and all his labours and conflicts, lived to the age of one hundred and five. And that nothing might be wanting to his crown, our Lord was pleaſed in the laſt part of his life, to give him an opportunity of exerciſing an extraordinary patience; by ſending him a tedious and moſt painful diſorder, which confined him to his bed, for a whole twelvemonth, under the anguiſh of moſt inſupportable pains. But how great ſoever his ſufferings might be, he kept always the ſame tranquillity of ſpirit; and never ſhewed, by word, or action, the leaſt ſign of impatience. A good old man, that was with him in his illneſs, perceiving how very much he ſuffered, ſuggeſted to him, to beg of God to eaſe him of his pains. The Saint ſhewing by his countenance, how much he diſliked the ſuggeſtion, ſaid to him: 'Pray father, never ſpeak to me any more in this 'manner. For my part, as often as any ſuch thought 'has offered itſelf to me, I have always rejected it 'as a temptation. For ſince our good works (if 'we have done any) have already received their re-'ward in this world, by the eſteem and applauſe, 'they have acquired us from the world: what grounds 'can we have to expect the conſolations and rewards of 'the world to come, if we do not ſuffer, and are not 'afflicted here? Should we not rather have all rea-'ſon to fear, leſt it ſhould be then objected to us: 'friend *remember that in thy life time thou didſt receive* '*good things*, and *hadſt thy comforts?*'

Three days before his death; God revealed to his ſervant, the time that he ſhould call him out of this place of baniſhment to his eternal home. Where-

fore having exhorted his religious to conſtancy, and perſeverance in their holy vocation, and to fight manfully againſt all the temptations of the enemy; he ſent to three neighbouring biſhops: who came in all haſte to viſit him, and were quite penetrated with grief, to ſee him ſo near his end; whilſt he, on the contrary, ſhewed by his chearful countenance the joy of his heart, at the approach of that happy hour for him, which was to ſet his ſoul at liberty from her long confinement in this houſe of clay, and to unite her eternally to her God. A little while before his departure, he lifted up his hands towards heaven, and prayed in ſilence: and then compoſing his hands upon his ſtomach, he quietly expired: on the eleventh of January (on which day his name is recorded in the Roman martyrology) anno 529.

Many miracles were wrought at his ſepulchre: where, as my author teſtifies, the blind recovered their ſight, the lame were made to walk &c. and a certain liquor continually diſtilled from his coffin, which was a ſovereign remedy for all diſeaſes.

Theodoret in his Philotheus, has given us the acts of another Saint, who was alſo called Theodoſius: a native of Antioch, who led a life of wonderful auſterity and ſanctity, in a mountain of Cilicia; ever praying and ſinging pſalms, and yet never ceaſing to labour with his hands; and training up many diſciples to the ſame exercices. In favour of theſe, and of the monaſtery he had built for them, he miraculouſly brought out a never failing ſtream of water from the hard rock: and was in ſo great and general eſteem, even amongſt the barbarians and infidels, by reaſon of his ſanctity and miracles; that they that were in danger at ſea, at a great diſtance off from the place of his reſidence, called upon the God of Theodoſius; and ſaw the tempeſt immediately ceaſe by the invocation of his name. He flouriſhed in the fourth century.

S T.

ST. SABAS.

From his life by Cyrillus, a faithful cotemporary writer.

SABAS, or Sabbas, was born at Mutalaſcus, a little town in the diſtrict of Ceſarea in Cappadocia, anno 437. His father, who was an officer in the troops, being obliged to go to Alexandria in Egypt, left his ſon, who was but five years old, together with his eſtate, in the hands of an unkle, whoſe name was Hermias. But the evil treatment Sabas here met with from his aunt, the wife of Hermias, obliged him to leave them, and to go to another unkle, whoſe name was Gregory. This produced a great contention between the two unkles, which ſhould have the care of his perſon, and of his eſtate: which gave the nephew, young as he was, ſo great a diſguſt for the world, that he reſolved to leave it; and accordingly retired to a monaſtery called Flavian, at three miles diſtance from Mutalaſcus: where the abbot received him amongſt his religious, though as yet but a child; and took care to have him well inſtructed, in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, and of all things neceſſary to acquit himſelf worthily of ſo holy a profeſſion. Here one day, as he was working in the garden, he took notice of an apple tree, laden with fruit, which appeared very fair and tempting; ſo that he gathered one of the apples, with a deſign to eat it. But immediately reflecting, that this was a trick of the old ſerpent, who heretofore drove our firſt parents out of paradiſe, by tempting them to eat of the forbidden fruit; and that he has no more dangerous bait, to enſnare youth with, than that of pleaſure; he reproached himſelf with the fault he had committed, flung down the apple, and trod upon it; and made a reſolution, never to eat of that kind of fruit,

fruit, all his life long. From this day, he lived in an extraordinary abſtinence, as to his eating and drinking: he ſlept no more than the neceſſity of nature abſolutely required: and excepting the time, when his hands were lifted up to God in prayer, they were perpetually employed in ſome manual labours: for he feared nothing more than idleneſs, becauſe of the opportunity it gives the enemy, to creep inſenſibly into the ſoul. This continual application of his, made him make ſuch progreſs in all virtue, that no one of the religious, who were to the number of ſeventy in this community, equalled him in obedience, in humility, or in any of the exercices of an evangelical life.

His unkles, being at length reconciled together, both joined in ſoliciting him to come out of the monaſtery, and to ſettle himſelf in the world, in a married life. But he reſiſted all their ſolicitations; and with the leave of his ſuperior, being now eighteen years old, went away to Jeruſalem, in order to reverence the holy places; and then to viſit the Saints, that inhabited the neighbouring deſarts, that he might learn of them the true ſcience of the ſaints. Here, after a ſhort ſtay in the monaſtery of St. Paſarion, he went and flung himſelf at the feet of the great St. Euthymius, deſiring to ſerve God under his holy diſcipline. Euthymius told him, he was too young as yet for the ſolitary life of the laura; but ſent him to the neighbouring monaſtery of his friend Theoctiſtus; with a particular recommendation of him to the abbot, as of one, who was likely to be in time a moſt illuſtrious Saint. In this monaſtery, the young Sabas conſecrated himſelf entirely to divine love. He ſpent the day in manual labours, and the night in fervent prayer. He was ever ready, as he was young and ſtrong, to comfort and aſſiſt the brethren, in their reſpective offices; he brought in water and wood, for the uſes of the community; he never

never ſpared himſelf; he took a moſt particular care of the ſick; he was always the firſt and the laſt at the divine office, which he ever recited with a moſt edifying devotion: all the religious were quite charmed with his obedience and humility; and could not without aſtoniſhment behold ſo great perfection in ſuch tender years.

It happened at this time, that one of the monks obtained leave of the abbot to go to Alexandria, to diſpoſe of an inheritance, left him by the death of his parents. Sabas, by obedience, accompanied him in this journey; and here unexpectedly met with his own father and mother; who lived at Alexandria. They were overjoyed to ſee him; and made moſt preſſing inſtances with him, to ſtay with them: but Sabas, having ſet his hand to the plough, abſolutely refuſed to look back: remembring what our Lord had ſaid, that ſuch as love father or mother more than him, are not worthy of him. 'They, ſaid he, 'that after enrolling themſelves in the ſervice of an 'earthly king, run away from their colours, are 'ſeverely puniſhed for their deſertion: what puniſh-'ment then ſhould not I deſerve, if after having en-'gaged myſelf in the ſervice of the king of heaven, I 'ſhould abandon ſo holy a warfare? Wherefore 'ceaſe, I pray you, to perſwade me to quit this way 'of life, which is of infinite advantage to my ſoul: 'or elſe you will oblige me to conſider you no lon-'ger as my parents and my friends, but as ſtrangers 'and enemies.' They deſired him at leaſt, if he would not ſtay with them, that he would accept of a conſiderable ſum of money, which they would have given him. But this he alſo refuſed; and it was with much ado, that they prevailed upon him to receive three pieces of ſilver; which as ſoon as he returned to the monaſtery, he immediately carried to the abbot: fearing nothing more than the demon of the love of money.

After

After the death of the holy abbot Theoctiſtus, with the approbation of St. Euthymius, he betook himſelf to a cavern belonging to the monaſtery: where he paſſed five days of the week in perfect ſolitude, faſting all the time, and working and praying. On the ſaturday and ſunday, he performed his devotions in the monaſtery: and then returning to his cavern, he carried with him the materials, of which he made, every week, to the number of fifty baſkets. And now St. Euthymius, who uſed to call him *the young old man*, by reaſon of his extraordinary wiſdom, deſired to have him nearer to himſelf: and therefore took him along with him, when he entered upon his yearly retreat, on the 14th of January, into the deſart of Ruban; where he was accuſtomed to paſs the holy time of lent. After they had walked for a long time together, over the barren ſands of this vaſt wilderneſs, where nothing green can grow, and no water can be found; Sabas was ſo ſpent with wearineſs and thirſt, that he could hold out no longer, but was obliged to lie down upon the ground, like one half dead. Euthymius pitying his diſtreſs, proſtrated himſelf in the preſence of God, and cried out from the bottom of his heart: 'Thou ſeeſt, O my 'God, the extremity to which this young ſoldier of 'thine, who fights under thy ſtandard, is now re- 'duced. Be pleaſed to relieve and aſſiſt him, by 'bringing forth water out of this dry and thirſty 'land.' After this prayer, he thruſt his ſtaff three times into the ground; and there preſently iſſued forth a ſpring of clear and excellent water; with which Sabas quenched his thirſt, and from the drinking of which, he found in himſelf ſuch vigour, ſtrength and comfort, as made him chearfully ſupport all that he had afterwards to ſuffer in that deſart.

After the death of St. Euthymius, Sabas retired into the wilderneſs near the river Jordan, which

St.

St. Gerafimus at that time illuſtrated with the rays of his ſanctity. Here paſſing the night on a ſolitary mountain in prayer, according to his cuſtom; he was directed by a heavenly viſion, to go and take up his abode in a cavern to the eaſt of the torrent of Siloe; with a promiſe, that God, who takes care of the meaneſt of his creatures, would not fail to be with him, and to provide for him. He preſently obeyed this ordinance of heaven; and going down from the mountain, was led, as it were, by the hand to the cavern; which was on the ſide of a ſteep hill, and of very difficult acceſs. Here he lived for ſome time, having no other nouriſhment but the herbs that grew wild about his cave; and being obliged to go ſix or ſeven miles for his water: which, with great difficulty, he carried up to his lodging, by the help of a rope, which he had made to hang down for that purpoſe, from his cavern to the foot of the hill. But divine providence at length conducted ſome of the country people to the place: who aſcending by the help of the rope to the cavern, and admiring the ſanctity of the ſervant of God, from that time forward furniſhed him with the little proviſions he ſtood in need of.

After he had dwelt five years all alone, in this cavern; God inſpired him to exerciſe his charity towards his neighbours, by receiving, inſtructing and directing, as many as deſired to quit the world, and to put themſelves under his conduct, in the way of God, and in religious perfection. To theſe he gave excellent leſſons of a ſpiritual life; and appointed them ſeparate places for building their cells, after the manner of a laura; which, in proceſs of time, became the moſt conſiderable of any in all Paleſtine. He built them alſo a chapel, where, as often as any prieſts came into the wilderneſs, he procured that the divine myſteries ſhould be celebrated: for as to his own part, his humility made him decline the prieſtly

prieſtly dignity, of which he deemed himſelf altogether unworthy. The firſt diſciples of the Saint were all of them men of eminent virtue, full of the Spirit of God; and who lived in the wilderneſs, like Angels in human bodies, continually employed in ſinging the praiſes of their Maker. They were in number about threeſcore and ten, (amongſt whom were ſeveral, who afterwards were founders and ſuperiors of other religious communities) But in theſe beginnings they laboured under great inconveniences, eſpecially for want of water, which they were forced to fetch, with great toil, from a ſpring that was ſeven miles diſtant. The Saint, one night in his prayer, earneſtly begged of our Lord to remedy this evil, by affording his ſervants a ſource of water nearer home: when behold at the concluſion of his prayer, he heard a noiſe; and looking towards the place, he perceived by the moonlight a wild aſs, making a hole in the ground with his foot, and then bowing down his head, as if it were to drink. The man of God conceiving by this, that his prayer was heard, went to the place, and opening the hole a little wider, brought out a ſtream of living water; which from that time never ceaſed to flow, through the midſt of the laura; ſo as neither to be ſwelled in winter, nor to be diminiſhed in ſummer; tho' almoſt all the people of that country came thither for water.

And now the number of thoſe, that came to put themſelves under his conduct, encreaſed exceedingly. But all of them were not led with the ſame ſpirit, as the firſt comers. On the contrary, ſome of them formed a faction againſt the holy abbot; and went to Saluſtius (who upon the death of Martyrius was lately made patriarch of Jeruſalem) to deſire he would give them a ſuperior: for that Sabas was clowniſh and ſimple; and that they wanted one, who was a prieſt. The new patriarch, who was no ſtranger to the merit of the Saint, inſtead of regarding

ding his accuſers, ſent for him, and ordained him prieſt in their preſence; and confirmed him in his charge of abbot and ſuperior: and going with him to the laura, conſecrated for him a church, and erected an altar in a ſpacious ſubterraneous den, which had been ſhewn to the man of God, by a pillar of fire, which reached from heaven to earth. Many others after this reſorted to the Saint, to put themſelves under his diſcipline: amongſt whom were divers excellent men of the Armenian nation; to whom the man of God made over his own firſt habitation, and the neighbouring oratory, in which he directed them to ſing the praiſes of God in their own language. About this time alſo, the father of the Saint being now dead at Alexandria; his mother Sophia came to viſit him; and by his counſel, having entirely renounced this world, paſſed the ſhort time, that remained of her life, in preparing her ſoul, by ſpiritual exercices, for a better place; and made a moſt holy and happy end, under his direction. The Saint conſecrated to the ſervice of God a conſiderable ſum of money, which ſhe bequeathed to him; and built with it two hoſpitals: the one for the entertainment of paſſengers, the other for the religious of other communities who came to viſit his laura.

Our Saint was united, in a moſt holy band of friendſhip, with the great St. Theodoſius; and ever joined with him, in promoting the common cauſe of their common Lord; as well in defending the purity of the Catholick faith, againſt all the attempts of hereſy; as in propagating religious diſcipline. Their union was ſo remarkable, that the people of Jeruſalem called them the two apoſtles; and the patriarch Saluſtius, at the deſire of the religious of his diſtrict, put under their care all the monaſteries round Jeruſalem: in ſuch manner that Theodoſius had the charge of all that lived in convents (from whence he had

had the name of Cenobiarcha) and Sabas the charge of all the anchorets and ſolitaries. But Euthymius was the Saint, whoſe life St. Sabas particularly choſe for the model of his own. By his example, he withdrew himſelf every year into the moſt remote parts of the wilderneſs; and there paſſed the holy time of lent, till palm-ſunday, in perfect ſolitude, faſting and prayer. In one of theſe his excurſions, he was conducted by divine providence to a ſteep mountain; on the top of which he found a cavern, and in this cavern a holy anchoret, who had lived there for eight and thirty years, upon nothing but wild herbs, without either ſeeing, or being ſeen, all that time, by any man. The edification he received by the heavenly converſation of this man of God, brought Sabas thither again another year, to receive his benediction; but he found him dead, in the poſture of one at his prayers; and entered him in his cavern.

In another of theſe excurſions, he came to a hill called Caſtel, lying at a great diſtance from all communication with men. This place he pitched upon as proper for a monaſtery: and after the Eaſter holidays, he led thither a colony of his diſciples, who found in the neighbourhood an old forſaken building, which they turned into a church: and then built themſelves cells all round about it. And as the firſt inhabitants of this holy ſolitude were men of eminent virtue, and wholly diſengaged from all earthly cares and affections; our Lord was pleaſed, in theſe beginnings, in a wonderful manner to provide for their ſubſiſtance; by giving in charge, in a viſion in his ſleep, to Marcian the ſuperior of the monaſteries of Bethlehem, to furniſh them with all neceſſaries: which he carefully executed.

Whilſt theſe things were doing, the malecontents, of whom we ſpoke before, were ſtregthening their faction, by bringing over ſeveral others to their

their ſide; ſo that no fewer than forty of the religious entered into a conſpiracy againſt their holy abbot; reſolving to uſe all the means in their power to get rid of him at any rate. The Saint being advertiſed of this, choſe quietly to withdraw himſelf from them, rather than to proceed to any meaſures againſt them, which might be leſs agreeable with that meekneſs, patience and humility, which make up the character of a diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt. Wherefore retiring into a deſart, not far from the city of Scythopolis; he took up his abode in a cavern, near the river of Gadar. This cavern happened to be a lion's den: but the beaſt, finding the Saint there, not only offered him no violence, but quietly yielded up to him the poſſeſſion of the place. He was not long here before the reputation of his ſanctity, which could no where lie concealed, brought many to viſit him from the neighbouring cities of Scythopolis and Gadara: amongſt whom was a young gentleman named Baſil; who, by an inſpiration of heaven, renounced the world for good and all, and came to dwell with Sabas in his cavern. Some thieves, who imagined that Baſil, who was rich, had carried off his money with him; came one night, in hopes of booty, to viſit the cavern; but finding nothing there, not even the neceſſaries of life, they were ſtruck with aſtoniſhment; and retired, not without a great regret for the evil they had purpoſed to commit; and a ſtrong apprehenſion of meeting with ſome rigorous puniſhment for it, from the juſtice of God. This apprehenſion was greatly encreaſed, when a little after they had left the cavern, they ſaw in their way ſome lions, whoſe terrible looks, ſeemed to threaten them with immediate death and deſtruction. In this extremity of danger, they bethought themſelves of the ſanctity of Sabas; and commanded the lions, in the name, and by the virtue of the prayers, of that venerable ſervant of God, to be gone. When behold they had

no ſooner pronounced the name of Sabas, but theſe furious beaſts turned their backs upon them, and ran away. This miracle not only wrought the total converſion of the thieves; but, being noiſed abroad, brought ſuch multitudes to viſit the Saint, as determined him (after recommending to God his diſciples there, and leaving to them the cell, he had lately built) to ſeek ſome other ſolitude, where he might attend to his God, with leſs diſtraction.

After ſome time he returned again to his laura; where to his great grief, he found no amendment at all in the diſpoſition of the malecontents: but that whatſoever, he could either ſay or do, to bring them to a right ſenſe of their duty, made them rather worſe than better. Upon this he retired towards Nicopolis, and abode for ſome time under a tree, in an open field; till the maſter of the field, admiring his ſanctity, built him a cell, which in a ſhort time was changed into a monaſtery. In the mean while the malecontents applied to Elias, the patriarch of Jeruſalem, for another ſuperior; pretending, that Sabas was devoured by a lion. The patriarch gave no credit to the fable: and not long after, Sabas himſelf coming to Jeruſalem, to celebrate the feaſt of the dedication of the church; he obliged him to return to his laura: with an order to the rebels, either to ſubmit to him, or to depart. They choſe the latter, and retired towards the torrent of Theon; and repaired ſome old cells, which they found there; and called this place the *new laura*. But as they were deſtitute of all things, and no one was willing to aſſiſt them; the Saint in his great charity, not only laboured to procure them all neceſſary proviſions; but went himſelf in perſon to carry them to them: nor did he ceaſe to ply them with benefits, both for their temporal and ſpiritual well being; till overcoming their evil with his good, he brought them over to diſpoſitions, more ſuitable to the ſanctity of their ſtate and

and profeſſion; and eſtabliſhed them in regular diſcipline, under a holy ſuperior, whom he appointed for them.

It would be endleſs to deſcend to all the particulars of the great things, which St. Sabas did, (for the many years, that remained of his life) for the glory of God, for the ſanctification of ſouls, and the propagation of the kingdom of Chriſt: the ſpirit of propheſy which he ſhewed on many occaſions; the great miracles God wrought by him; and his labours for the public good of the church, and maintaining the purity of the faith; as well during the reign of Anaſtaſius the Eutychian, as during that of his ſucceſſors Juſtin and Juſtinian. Theſe would ſuffice for a volume: and therefore are omitted here, as exceeding the bounds of our intended brevity. We ſhall then only add, that as he had always lived the life of a Saint, ſo he died the death of a Saint; on the fifth of December (on which day he is honoured by the church) anno 531, ætatis 94. And that after his death, many miracles were wrought by his interceſſion.

ST. JOHN, the Silent.

From his diſciple Cyrillus, the ſame who wrote the lives of St. Euthymius, and St. Sabas.

JOHN, from his great affection to ſilence, ſurnamed *Silentiarius*, or the *Silent*, was born in the leſſer Armenia, of parents illuſtrious, according to the world, (anno 453) who being good Chriſtians, gave him a Chriſtian education. At the age of eighteen he left the world; and employed that part of the eſtate, which fell to him, by the death of his father and mother, in building a church in honour of the bleſſed Virgin; together with a monaſtery, into which he retired, with ten other perſons, who were deſirous like him, to think of nothing elſe but the ſalvation of their ſouls. The life that he here led, in perfect purity of ſoul and body, joined with a moſt profound humility; and the heavenly prudence, with which he conducted the religious committed to his charge, recommended him firſt to the prieſtly character; and not long after, upon the death of the biſhop of Colonia, determined the metropolitan, (the archbiſhop of Sebaſte) to conſecrate no other than him, to fill up this vacancy. In order to this, he ſent for John, as if it were upon ſome other occaſion; and when he had him with him, in ſpite of all his remonſtrances, he ordained him biſhop. He was then thirty eight years of age: and for ten years, diſcharged himſelf, in a moſt edifying manner, of all the duties of the epiſcopal miniſtery; practiſing all the while the ſame religious exercices as he had been accuſtomed to in his monaſtery.

At the latter end of this time, finding his church and his clergy very much oppreſſed, by the governour of the province (who was his brother-in-law) and that all his remonſtrances only ſerved to make him worſe;

worſe; he took a journey to Conſtantinople, to ſeek a remedy for theſe evils. Here with the help of the patriarch Euphemius, he ſettled the affairs of his dioceſe, in the beſt manner he could; and then following a divine inſpiration, and reſolving totally to withdraw himſelf from the world; without acquainting any one with his deſign, he privately got on board a ſhip, and went away to Jeruſalem. Here he took up his lodging in a hoſpital, where there was a chappel of St. George the matyr: and for the time he remained there, was continually praying with many tears, that God would direct him to a proper place, where he might attend to nothing elſe but to the working out his own ſalvation. As he was paſſing one night in prayer, to this effect, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he perceived a light, in form of a croſs, coming towards him; and heard a voice that ſaid to him: 'if thou deſireſt to ſave 'thy ſoul, follow this light.' He immediately obeyed; and going out, by following this heavenly light, he was conducted to the great laura of St. Sabas: where at that time there were one hundred and fifty ſolitaries; living in a very great want of all temporal things, but rich in the treaſures of divine grace.

The holy abbot received this new comer, without knowing who he was; and recommended him to the procurator of the community: under whom he was employed for ſome time in divers offices, for the ſervice of the other religious; fetching water for them, preparing their victuals, carrying ſtones for the building, which they had at that time in hand; dreſſing and carrying the workmen their dinners, at the diſtance of above a mile from his lodgings; entertaining the ſtrangers that came; and in a word, doing all that any of the monks deſired of him; with ſuch humility, readineſs and chearfulneſs, as made him both admired, and loved by them all.

After this, St. Sabas appointed him a little cell, in which for the ſpace of three years he lived in ſilence; taking no manner of nouriſhment for five days of the week; and only coming out to the church on ſaturdays and ſundays; where he was always the firſt, and the laſt; and ſung there the pſalms of the divine office, with that reſpectful awe, with that modeſt gravity, and with that fervent piety, which edified all that ſaw him: he aſſiſted alſo there at the unbloody ſacrifice and ſacrament of the altar, with ſo great a compunction and devotion, that he could not refrain from ſhedding an abundance of tears, during the time of the celebrating thoſe divine myſteries.

After theſe three years of ſilence, St. Sabas gave him the charge of procurator of the Laura; to the great advantage of the whole community: God giving his bleſſing to his ſervant, and aſſiſting him in all things. And now his time of exerciſing this office being expired; the holy abbot, ſeeing him ſo accompliſhed in all virtue, took him with him to Jeruſalem; and deſired the patriarch (St. Elias, the ſucceſſor of Saluſtius, and formerly diſciple of St Euthymius) to impoſe his hands upon him, and to ordain him prieſt. The ſervant of God, on this occaſion, deſired he might be firſt allowed to ſpeak to the patriarch in private; and having obtained of him a promiſe of ſecrecy, he told him; that he had been a biſhop; but that the multitude of his ſins had determined him to quit his ſee, and to flee into the deſart, in order to bewail his ſins, and obtain the divine mercy; and in the mean time, as long as he was ſtrong and robuſt, to labour all he could to aſſiſt and comfort thoſe good religious, to whom God had aſſociated him. The patriarch was aſtoniſhed at the hearing of this; and calling for St. Sabas, ſaid to him: 'This monk has diſcovered to me in private 'ſome particulars, which will not allow me to or-

'dain

'dain him prieſt. Take him therefore back with 'you, and let him live in ſilence; and let no one 'diſturb him.' St. Sabas, being thus diſappointed, and withal very much concerned, thro the apprehenſion he had, leſt ſome great evil might have been diſcovered by the patriarch, which had hindred him from admitting his diſciple to holy orders; betook himſelf to his prayers, and ceaſed not to importune our Lord, to let him know, whether John was indeed, as he had thought, a veſſel of ſanctification, and worthy of the prieſtly function, or no? At length an Angel appearing to him, (after he had ſpent the whole night in prayer) told him, that John was indeed *a veſſel of election:* but being already a biſhop, could not be ordained prieſt. St. Sabas, who was often favoured with the like viſions, went immediately to St. John's cell; and embracing him ſaid. 'I find, father, that you have hidden from 'me the grace you have received from God: but he 'has been pleaſed to reveal it to me. You mortify 'me exceedingly, ſaid John, by ſpeaking thus to me. 'I was in hopes this ſecret would not have been 'known by any man: but now I ſee I muſt leave 'this country.' Sabas deſired him to be eaſy; and made him a ſolemn promiſe, that he would tell no man. Upon which he was content to continue with him; yet ſo as to keep cloſe in his cell: where he ſpent four years more in perfect ſolitude and ſilence; till the inſolence of the monks having driven St. Sabas away from the Laura, John would ſtay no longer there; nor have any communication with the rebels: but retired to the deſart of Ruban; where he found a cavern, in which he paſſed nine years, converſing with God alone, and living upon what wild herbs or roots he could find in the wilderneſs.

Whilſt he was in this ſolitude, one of the religious came to viſit him, and ſtaid a while with him: but being quickly wearied with ſo auſtere a kind of life,

and ſo ſtrict a retirement, he propoſed to him, that they ſhould return together to the Laura; to celebrate with the brethren the approaching feaſt of Eaſter; and not to continue where they were, to ſtarve in that barren deſart. The Saint, who could not think of returning to the Laura, as long as Sabas was not there; exhorted the brother to a confidence in divine providence: which, as heretofore it had fed ſix hundred thouſand men, for the ſpace of forty years in the wilderneſs, could with all eaſe abundantly provide for them two. But his exhortation made no impreſſion on the mind of his companion: who preſently took his leave of him, and departed. He was ſcarce gone, when an unknown perſon came to the cavern of the Saint, driving an aſs, laden with all ſorts of proviſions; which he beſtowed upon the ſervant of God: whoſe faith his divine majeſty was pleaſed to reward in this wonderful manner. Whilſt the other, inſtead of going back to the Laura, loſt his way in the wilderneſs; and after wandring about for three days, being now quite exhauſted and famiſhed, returned to the Saint; and ſeeing all the good things that God had ſent him, acknowledged his own error, and aſked pardon for it.

Whilſt St. John was living in this deſart, the Saracens made an in-road upon the borders of the empire, on the ſide of Paleſtine; and committed great outrages. On this occaſion the Saint was preſſed by the monks of the Laura, to come and ſhelter himſelf amongſt them; where he ſhould be more remote from the danger of the enemy's parties, and protected by the Roman ſoldiers. But he, who had found by experience, how ſweet it was to converſe alone with his God, in that wilderneſs; choſe rather to remain where he was: putting his whole truſt in him, who has given his Angels a charge over his ſervants, to guard them in all their ways. And his divine goodneſs was pleaſed to ſhew his approbation, of this entire

entire confidence, which his ſervant placed in him; by ſending him, as my author learnt from the Saint's own mouth, a great lion to be his viſible guard. At the firſt ſight of the beaſt, the man of God was ſtruck with ſome fear; but he quickly recovered himſelf, and found that the creature meant him no harm, but carefully attended him day and night, and ſuffered no enemy to come near his cavern.

At the end of the nine years, St. Sabas viſited him, and brought him back with him to the Laura. Where he lived for many years ſhut up in his cell: no one, but the holy abbot, knowing all this while of his being a biſhop: till God was pleaſed it ſhould be diſcovered, and made known to the whole community; by the means of Atherius, an Aſiatick prelate, who having made a pilgrimage of devotion to Jeruſalem, was directed from heaven, to go and viſit our Saint, in the Laura of St. Sabas: and there acquainted the religious with the treaſure they poſſeſſed in him; and with all the particulars of his former life. John was now ſeventy years of age: and this ſame year, God was pleaſed to take St. Sabas to himſelf. Our Saint was ſenſibly touched with the loſs of his holy father: the more becauſe being ſhut up in his cell, he had not been preſent at his death. When behold St. Sabas appeared to him in a dream, bidding him not to be afflicted at his death: for though they were now ſeparated in body, they were ſtill united in ſpirit. John deſired he would pray to God for him; that he would be pleaſed to take him alſo out of this miſerable world. But Sabas told him, that could not be as yet: becauſe his longer ſtay in the world was neceſſary to ſupport the brethren, under the grievous conflicts and temptations, which they were like to be expoſed to, from the enemies of their faith.

Twenty

Twenty years after this, when the Saint was now four-ſcore and ten years old, my author, who had been received, when a child, by St. Sabas, into the number of his diſciples, was directed by his pious mother to St. John, in order to be guided in all things, by his counſels, for the welfare of his ſoul. The Saint told him, if he deſired to ſave his ſoul, he would adviſe him to enter into the monaſtery of St. Euthymius. But he being then young and giddy, neglected the advice, and choſe rather to go towards the Jordan, to dwell in ſome of the religious houſes in that part of the country. Here being in the Laura, called the Reedfield, he was taken violently ill; being unaccuſtomed to the yoke of religious diſcipline; and ſuffered at the ſame time a great anguiſh of mind, as well as bodily pain: when behold the Saint appeared to him in a dream, and ſaid to him: 'See how you are now chaſtized, becauſe you would 'not be adviſed by me. But riſe up, and go to 'Jericho, and there you ſhall find in the hoſpital of 'the abbot Euthymius, a very ancient religious 'man: follow him into the monaſtery, into which 'he ſhall conduct you, and there you ſhall find the 'ſalvation of your ſoul.' He awaked upon this, and found himſelf perfectly cured: and preſently getting up, after receiving the bleſſed ſacrament, and taking ſome nouriſhment, he walked the ſame day to Jericho. From hence he went to the monaſtery of St. Euthymius: and from that time always applied to our Saint, for his ſpiritual direction.

This gave him an opportunity, of being an eye-witneſs of the wonders, God wrought by his Saint. As when in his preſence, one, whoſe name was George, brought his ſon, that was grievouſly tormented with an evil ſpirit; and left him before the window of his cell (for no one ever came within the door) who was immediately delivered, upon the Saint's praying for him, and anointing him with the oil of the holy croſs.

croſs. But the miracles wrought by him, for the cure of ſouls, were the moſt remarkable. The abbot Euſtatius applied one day to the Saint, upon occaſion of a moſt violent and obſtinate temptation of blaſphemous thoughts, deſiring him to pray for him. The ſervant of God did ſo: and then turning to him, he ſaid: 'God be praiſed, my ſon, you will never 'be troubled with the like thoughts any more.' As in effect he never was. This my author learnt from Euſtatius himſelf.

A lady of Conſtantinople, named Baſiliſſa, who was deaconneſs of the great church there, having taken a journey to the holy land; in the company of a kinſman of hers, who though otherwiſe vertuous and religious, was infected with the errors of Eutyches; hearing of the wonderful graces beſtowed upon our Saint; had a great deſire to ſee him, and to ſpeak to him. But being informed, that no woman was allowed to come within the incloſure of the Laura; ſhe ſent to Theodore, his diſciple, and begged of him to take her couſin along with him to the Saint; in hopes that by his bleſſing and prayers, he might be reclaimed from his errors, and converted. Theodore took the young man with him, and knockt at the Saint's window, according to his cuſtom: which when he had opened, they both of them knelt down, and craved his bleſſing. The man of God told his diſciple, that as for his part, he gave him his benediction: but that he could not do as much for his companion, becauſe by ſchiſm and hereſy, he was an alien from the catholick church of God. The young man, aſtoniſhed to hear him ſpeak in this manner of the ſtate of his ſoul, which he could not know but by divine revelation; was, by an evident miracle of grace, perfectly converted upon the ſpot; and renouncing his hereſy, after a competent preparation, was admitted by the Saint to the holy communion. The lady, overjoyed at his converſion, conceived a ſtill greater

greater deſire of ſeeing the Saint, and of treating with him about the ſtate of her ſoul. Inſomuch that ſhe had formed a deſign, of putting on man's cloaths, that ſo ſhe might have acceſs to him. But the Saint, knowing by revelation her deſign, ſent to her to lay aſide that uſeleſs ſcheme: for that he would not be ſeen by her, in that manner. But if ſhe would ſtay where ſhe was, ſhe ſhould ſee him in her ſleep; and then might put what queſtions ſhe pleaſed to him. The following night, or at leaſt not long after, the Saint appeared to her, in a dream, and ſaid to her. 'God 'hath ſent me to you: you may now propoſe to me 'all that you want to know.' She then declared to him all, that ſhe had in her mind; and ſhe received from him a full ſatisfaction in every particular. For which ſhe returned great thanks to God. All this, ſays my author, I can aſſure to be very true: for I had it from her own mouth.

And here my author concludes his account of our Saint, who was, at the time of his writing, actually living: doubting not, as he ſays, but that others would deliver in a more ample manner to poſterity, the great things that God had wrought by him; as well as his many labours and ſufferings, in defence of the faith of the church. The Saint was at that time one hundred and four years old: and though weak in body, yet perfect in all the faculties of his ſoul; and by a chearful countenance, ever ſhewed forth the joy of his heart, and the purity of his conſcience. How long he lived after this, or in what year he departed to our Lord, I have not found. But his name ſtands recorded among the Saints, in the Roman martyrology, on the thirteenth of May.

ST.

St. JOHN Climacus.

From Daniel monk of Raithu, his cotemporary, and from his own writings.

JOHN, ſurnamed *Climacus*, from his excellent book entitled *Climax*, that is the *Scale* or *ladder* of Chriſtian and religious perfection, was born about the year 525. as it is thought, in ſome part of Paleſtine. After an innocent education at home, in the exercices of Chriſtian piety, joined with the ſtudy of human ſciences; when he had attained to the age of ſixteen, he took a happy reſolution to leave the world, and all the things in the world, in order to find the treaſure of evangelical perfection, in the field of religious diſcipline. The place he pitched upon for his retirement, in which he might ſpend the remaining days of his mortality, was mount Sina; where the Lord heretofore gave his law to Moſes; and which from the time, that St. Antony and St. Hilarion began to propagate the monaſtick inſtitute, had always been peopled with holy ſolitaries. Some of theſe lived as hermites, in loneſome cells; others in the great monaſtery, on the top of the mountain; which was at this time one of the moſt celebrated in the church of God. But John took a middle way; and declining the multitude of the convent, as expoſing him to more diſtractions; and yet not venturing, becauſe he was young and unexperienced, to live quite by himſelf, as an anchoret; he put himſelf under the diſcipline of a holy man, who had his cell on the ſide of the mountain, whoſe name was Martyrius; and lived with him, for nineteen years, in the exercices of an humble and faithful obedience; in ſuch manner as that he ſeemed from his very firſt entring upon this courſe of life, to have left his own will behind him; and notwithſtanding his

his great wit and learning, (which is ſo apt to puff men up) to judge of nothing by his own lights, and to do nothing by his own choice; but to regulate himſelf in all things, by an humble dependance on the conduct and direction of his ſuperior, as the ſureſt way, for him to be conducted and directed by God himſelf.

After four years probation, he made his ſolemn profeſſion, by which he eternally dedicated himſelf to God. At which time a holy abbot, who was preſent, foretold that this young religious man would be, one day, one of the greateſt lights of the church of God. From the time of his profeſſion, John continued ſtill to live, with the ſame ſimplicity and humility, under the direction of Martyrius; making all the time a continual progreſs, both in virtue, and in the knowledge of the holy ſcriptures; on which he meditated day and night. Martyrius ſome times took him along with him, to viſit the Saints, who dwelt in that neighbourhood. One day he brought him to a ſervant of God, whoſe name was Anaſtaſius: who fixing his eyes upon him, told Martyrius that his diſciple would be one day abbot of mount Sina. Now this was looked upon in thoſe days, as one of the higheſt promotions, in the whole monaſtick order; and a dignity, to which none were raiſed but ſuch as were moſt eminent in ſanctity; no others being thought proper to be fathers and ſuperiors of ſo many Saints, as then inhabited that holy mountain. Another time they went together to viſit John, ſurnamed the Sabaite, becauſe he had been a diſciple of St. Sabas. This holy man, according to the cuſtom of the ſolitaries, waſhed the feet of his gueſts; beginning with the diſciple. For which being aſked the reaſon, he ſaid, he did not know, who that young man was: but he believed he ſaw in him an abbot of mount Sina.

At

At the end of nineteen years, our Lord took Martyrius to himſelf: and then our Saint, by the counſel of George the Arſilaite, an eminent ſervant of God, undertook an anachoretical life, in a cell by himſelf, at the foot of the mountain, at the diſtance of five miles from the church: to which nevertheleſs he repaired on all ſaturdays and ſundays, to join with all the reſt of the religious, in the divine office, and in aſſiſting at the ſacred myſteries, and receiving the bleſſed ſacrament. In this hermitage he continued for forty years, practiſing in the higheſt degree of perfection, thoſe three principal virtues of a ſolitary life, which he has ſo much recommended in his writings: viz. a total diſengagement of his thoughts, and of his heart, from all temporal things: a continual watchfulneſs; and a continual prayer: which conſiſted, as we learn from his own doctrine (Grad. 27) in having God always for his object; and his divine will for his rule, in all his exercices, in all his words, in all his thoughts, and in every motion and ſtep that he took; and in doing nothing but in the preſence of God; and with an internal fervour of ſpirit. This gift of continual prayer was accompanied with the gift of tears, which he frequently poured forth in private before our Lord, bewailing his ſins, with the deepeſt compunction of heart. Nor did his frequent application to the reading of holy writ, and of the writings of the Saints, interrupt his prayer, or his tears: but rather ſerved as a fuel to that inward fire of divine love, which produced both the one and the other. Nor did the knowledge he here acquired, nor the particular lights, which the Spirit of God imparted to him, for the inſtruction and conduct of others, prejudice in the leaſt his humility, or make him think he was left upon earth, for any thing elſe, but to bewail his ſins in ſolitude, and to do penance for them.

Many

Many, as well religious, as ſeculars, came from time to time to conſult him, about the concerns of their ſouls: to whom, with great candour and ſimplicity, he communicated the lights, which God gave him. A ſolitary, whoſe name was Moſes, not content with only coming to conſult him, prevailed with him, by the interceſſion of the ancients of mount Sina, to receive him in quality of his diſciple. This Moſes was one day ſent by the Saint, to fetch earth from a place at ſome diſtance, for the uſe of their little garden. The fatigue of the work, and the heat of the ſun, obliged him, towards noonday, to go and reſt himſelf on the ſide of a bank, under the ſhadow of a rock, or great ſtone, that hung over his head. Here laying himſelf down he fell faſt aſleep. In the mean time the Saint, who had been praying in his cell, happened alſo to fall into a ſlumber; in which there appeared to him a venerable perſon, that ſaid: 'Doſt thou ſleep, John, without any concern: get 'up, for Moſes is upon the brink of danger.' He immediately awaked upon this admonition, and betook himſelf to his prayers, to beg a deliverance for his diſciple. And whilſt he was praying for him, the divine goodneſs was pleaſed that Moſes alſo ſhould hear, as he thought, in his ſleep, the voice of his maſter, calling upon him to get up with all ſpeed: upon which he preſently ſtarted up in a fright, and ran away from the bank; and within leſs than a minute, the great ſtone, under which he had been ſleeping, fell down; ſo that if he had remained there one minute longer, he muſt have been cruſhed to death.

The common enemy of the good of ſouls, ſeeing with an envious eye, the great advantages that many reaped from the inſtructions, and ſpiritual diſcourſes, which the Saint made to them, that viſited him; ſtirred up the jealouſy of certain perſons; who pretended to take ſcandal, at his ſpeaking too much; and

and ſaid that he was a babler, who gave himſelf airs, and only loved to hear himſelf talk. The Saint, who ſought not his own glory, but that of God, and who had no opinion at all of his own performances, but had only yielded to ſpeak, thro' the importunity of his brethren, and by fraternal charity; far from juſtifying or excuſing himſelf, or even taking in evil part what they ſaid of him; believing they had only meant to give him a charitable admonition, and a fraternal correction; was reſolved to comply with it: and in conſequence of it, condemned himſelf to an inviolable ſilence; which he kept for a whole twelvemonth: till thoſe very men, overcome with his wonderful humility and modeſty, and ſenſible of the detriment they had done to the publick, by depriving them of the wholeſom inſtructions and directions of the man of God, joined with all the reſt of the brethren, in begging of him to reſume his former practice.

And now the Saint had lived forty years an anchoret in his cell, when all the religious of mount Sina, with one accord, choſe him for their abbot; and in ſpite of all his reſiſtance, obliged him to quit his hermitage, and to come and be the conducter, and general ſuperior of them all. Thus this great light was ſet upon the candleſtick, and from thence caſt his bright rays far and near, to enlighten the whole world. The luſtre of his ſanctity, reached even as far as Rome, from whence that moſt holy pope, St. Gregory the great, ſent letters to him, teſtifying the great eſteem he had of his eminent virtue. And now it was that John the abbot of Raithu (a famous monaſtery on the confines of Egypt) obtained of our Saint, to commit alſo to writing, the great lights he had received from God, for directing and conducting ſouls to the very top of the mountain of religious perfection. This he has happily executed, in his excellent book, entitled *Climax*, or the *Ladder*, of thirty ſteps, or degrees, of Chriſtian virtues, by which the ſoul mounts

up to the heavenly paradiſe. From this work it appears, that the Saint, before the compoſing of it, had made a viſit to a famous monaſtery in Egypt (believed to have been of the order, or congregation, of St. Pachomius) of which he makes frequent mention; with great elogium, as well of the abbot, as of divers of the monks by name. Here he continued a conſiderable time; and with the leave of the ſuperior, he went alſo to ſee the monaſtery, or rather priſon, of the penitents (which was about a mile off from the abbey) and remained in it thirty days. The wonders of divine grace, which he diſcovered there, in the whole demeanour of theſe happy penitents, he has ſet down at large in his fifth ſtep, or degree of his Ladder, which is that of *penitence:* of which, for a ſpur to penitent ſinners, we ſhall here give an abſtract.

'Being come, ſaith he, into this monaſtery of the 'penitents, I beheld things, which the eye of the 'ſlothful has never ſeen; the ear of the negligent 'has never heard; and which have never entered into 'the heart of the ſluggard: things and words, capa- 'ble of doing violence, if I may ſay ſo, to the Al- 'mighty.—I ſaw ſome of theſe penitents ſtanding 'whole nights upright, without allowing themſelves 'any ſleep, or reſt at all.—Others, in a pitiful man- 'ner, looking up towards heaven, and calling for 'help from thence, with groans, and ſighs, and pray- 'ers. Others I ſaw, who in their prayer, had their 'hands bound behind them, like criminals, and who 'bowing down their pale countenances towards the 'ground, declared aloud that they were unworthy 'to lift up their eyes to heaven; and that they durſt 'not preſume to ſpeak to God, *&c.* I ſaw ſome 'ſitting on the flour, covered with haircloth and 'aſhes, hiding their faces between their knees, and 'ſtriking their foreheads againſt the earth; others 'beating their breaſts, with inexpreſſible contrition

'of

'of heart. Some of theſe watered the ground about 'them with their tears; others grievouſly lamented 'that they could not weep: ſeveral of them mourn-'ed, with a lowd cry, over their own ſouls, as we 'mourn over the dead corpſe of a dear friend: 'others there were, who ready to roar for grief, 'eagerly ſtrove to ſtifle the noiſe of their complaints, 'till being no longer able to repreſs them, they 'were forced to let them break forth with greater 'violence. Others appeared ſo aſtoniſhed, that one 'would have taken them for ſtatues of braſs; ſo 'inſenſible of all things, had the exceſs of their 'ſorrow rendred them. Their heart was plunged 'in an abyſs of humility; and their ſcorching grief, 'had dried up all their tears, *&c.* There might one 'have ſeen the words of David fulfilled in fact, by 'theſe holy penitents, *I am become miſerable, and am 'bowed down even to the end: I walked ſorrowful all 'the day long. I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly.* 'And again, *I am ſmitten as graſs, and my heart is 'withered, becauſe I forgot to eat my bread.—For I did 'eat aſhes like bread, and mingled my drink with weep-'ing.* No other words were heard amongſt them, 'but ſuch as theſe: wo, wo, to me a miſerable ſin-'ner: 'tis with juſtice, O Lord, 'tis with juſtice: 'ſpare us, O Lord, ſpare us: have mercy on us.— 'Some of them afflicted themſelves, by ſtanding 'parching in the ſun's moſt violent heat: others on 'the contrary, expoſed themſelves to ſuffer no leſs 'from the extremity of the cold. Some taking a 'ſmall quantity of water, in the violence of their 'thirſt, contented themſelves with only taſting of 'it: and others, after eating a little morſel of bread, 'caſt the reſt away, ſaying they were not worthy 'to eat the food of men, ſince they had acted more 'like irrational creatures, than men. There was no 'room here for laughter: none for idle talk; none

'for reſentment, or anger, or contradiction: none 'for mirth, or for the care of the body, or good 'cheer, or the pleaſures of eating or drinking: none 'for the leaſt ſmoak of vain-glory: no earthly cares 'diſtracted them: they knew not what it was to 'judge, or condemn any man, but themſelves. Their 'whole employment was to cry day and night to 'our Lord: and no voice was heard in this com-'pany but that of prayer. There were ſome of 'them, who beating their breaſts with all their 'might, as if they were ſtanding and knocking at 'the gate of heaven, ſaid to the Lord: O open to 'us, by thy mercy, open to us the gate, which we 'have ſhut againſt ourſelves by our ſins. Another 'cried out: *Shew us only thy face, O Lord, and we 'ſhall be ſaved.* Another ſaid, ſhew thyſelf, O Lord, 'to thy poor ſuppliants, that ſit in darkneſs, and 'in the ſhadow of death, *&c.* They had always 'the hour of their death preſent before their eyes: 'and would be ſaying, O what ſhall our end be? 'What ſentence ſhall then be pronounced upon us? 'Will God revoke the juſt judgment we have de-'ſerved? Has our prayer been able to make its 'way before the preſence of the Lord? Has it been 'regarded, coming from ſuch unclean hearts and lips 'as ours? Has ſome part at leaſt of our ſins been blot-'ted out? For as they are very great, they ſtand in need 'of very many penitential labours and ſorrows, to be 'wholly effaced. Who can tell, whether even our 'good Angels are near us, to preſent our prayers; 'or whether the ſtench of our ſins has not driven 'them away? *&c.* Some replied to theſe interro-'gations: who knows, brethren (as the Ninivites 'ſaid heretofore) but that our Lord may pardon 'us, and deliver us from that dreadful penance of 'the world to come? Let us neglect nothing that 'lies in us: let us continue to knock at the door

'of

'of his mercy, even till the end of our life: perhaps he will yield to our importunity, and perseverance; for he is good and merciful. Let us run, brethren, let us run, for we have need to run, and to run with all our speed, that we may recover what we have loſt. Let us run, and not ſpare this filthy fleſh: let us make it ſuffer in time; becauſe it has expoſed us to the danger of ſuffering for eternity. Thus ſaid theſe holy criminals, and they made good what they ſaid. Their knees were hardened with continual prayer: their eyes appeared ſunk into their heads: the hair of their eye-lids was fallen away, with their continual weeping: their cheeks were rivelled, and as it were, parcht with the ſcalding of their tears: their breaſts bruiſed with blows, &c.

The Saint adds a great deal more, with regard to the ſentiments and diſpoſitions of theſe holy penitents; and all that he ſaw and heard amongſt them, during his ſtay there. And then concludes his narration in this manner. 'After I had remained thirty days in this priſon, I returned to the great monaſtery, to that holy man, the abbot: who ſeeing me quite altered, and like a man wholly aſtoniſhed; comprehending the cauſe of my amazement, ſaid to me: How is it, father John? Have you ſeen the labours and conflicts of our penitents? Yes, ſaid I, father, I have both ſeen, and admired them: and I cannot but eſteem them more happy, who mourn in this manner, after falling into ſin; than thoſe who have not fallen, and therefore bewail not themſelves. Becauſe it ſeems to me that their fall has been an occaſion to them of a moſt happy, and moſt ſecure riſing up again.

Our Saint after publiſhing this book, did not continue long in his ſtation of abbot; but exchanged

it for his beloved ſolitude; returning into the deſart, to prepare himſelf for eternity. He departed to our Lord, in an advanced age, about the Year 605: and his name is enregiſtred amongſt the ſaints, in the Roman martyrology, on the thirtieth of March.

ST.

St. JOHN the Almoner.

From his life written by Leontius, his cotemporary, biſhop of Neapolis in Cyprus.

THIS Saint, whoſe life has been commonly publiſhed with thoſe of the fathers of the deſart (though it does not appear, that he ever lived in the deſart) was born in Cyprus, about the year 552: his father, Epiphanius, being at that time governour of the iſland. He was brought up from his childhood in Chriſtian piety; and amongſt other virtues, he was always in a particular manner addicted to alms-deeds, and to the works of mercy, and charity to the poor: from whence the ſirname of *the almoner* or *alms-giver*, has ſtuck to him ever ſince. He was confirmed in the love and practice of this virtue, by a viſion which he had in his youth; which he himſelf afterwards related, in this manner. 'When 'I was, ſaid he, no more than fifteen years old; 'and was living in the iſle of Cyprus; I ſaw one 'night in a dream, a young virgin, crowned with 'olive, of an incomparable beauty, and more bright 'than the ſun: who ſtanding by my bed, ſtruck me 'on the ſide, and awaked me. After I was awaked, 'I ſtill perceived her ſtanding there; and ſuppoſed 'her to be a woman. Wherefore making the ſign 'of the croſs, I aſked her who ſhe was, and how ſhe 'had the boldneſs to come thus to my bed ſide, when I 'was aſleep? She anſwered me, with a ſweet and ſmiling 'countenance: I am the eldeſt daughter of the great 'King: take me for thy friend, and I will conduct 'thee into his preſence. For no one has ſo much 'power and intereſt, with that great Monarch, as I 'have: it was I that even brought him down from 'heaven to the earth, and made him to become 'man, in order to ſave men. Having ſaid theſe

'words ſhe diſappeared. As ſoon as I recovered 'myſelf, I began to think, that this heavenly beauty 'repreſented mercy, compaſſion for the afflicted, 'and alms-deeds: becauſe it was indeed the mercy, 'compaſſion, and goodneſs of God towards us men, 'that made him come down from heaven, to cloth 'himſelf with our humanity. I got up, and dreſſed 'myſelf immediately, without awaking any of my 'people, and at the firſt dawning of the day, I went 'out to the church. In my way, I met with a poor 'man, all trembling with cold; and, to make as it 'were an experiment of the truth of the viſion, I 'put off my cloak, and gave it him. Preſently 'after, when I had not yet reached the church door, 'a ſtranger clothed in white, came up to me, and 'put a purſe into my hands, in which were a hun-'dred pieces of money, ſaying: Take this, my bro-'ther, and diſtribute it as you ſhall ſee fitting. 'The joy, together with the ſurprize I was in, made 'me receive the purſe without demur: but upon 'reflection, I turned back, to follow the perſon, and 'to return him the money, as having no want or occa-'ſion for it: but I could ſee no more of him. From 'that day, I often gave alms to my brethren the 'poor; and I ſaid within myſelf: now I ſhall ſee, 'if Jeſus Chriſt, according to his promiſe in the 'Goſpel, will return me a hundred fold: in which 'I did very ill, in tempting God; and had after-'wards a great ſcruple for it: yet I ſtill received 'from him, at ſundry times, and in divers manners, 'all the ſatisfaction I could deſire.' So far the Saint, ſpeaking of his younger days.

St. John had given great examples of all virtues, more eſpecially of an unbounded charity, in a ſecular life, till he was about fifty-four years of age: when the great reputation of his ſanctity, which was ſpread far and near, ſo far recommended him to the church of Alexandria, that upon the death of their patriarch

patriarch (Theodore) they pitched upon him to fill up that vacancy. The emperour Heraclius uſing alſo all his intereſt, to overcome the repugnance the Saint had to this promotion: of which he thought himſelf infinitely unworthy. As ſoon as he arrived at Alexandria, he ſent for the officers of the church, and the archdeacon; and ſaid to them: 'It would not be 'juſt, O, my brethren, if we ſhould begin with 'any other care or concern, before that which we 'owe to Jeſus Chriſt. Wherefore be pleaſed to go 'through the city, and let me have an exact liſt 'of all my maſters.' And as they ſeemed not to know, who they were, whom he called his maſters; he explained himſelf to them, and told them he meant the poor; whom he conſidered as his lords and maſters; and as his aſſiſtants alſo, who by their prayers, were to help him to heaven. The liſt of the poor, which they brought in, was found to amount, in that great and populous city, to upwards of ſeven thouſand, five hundred: yet notwithſtanding their great number, the Saint gave orders that a daily allowance of all neceſſaries ſhould be made to every one of them, out of his revenue.

After his conſecration, he immediately applied himſelf, with all diligence and fervour, to execute, with the utmoſt perfection, every branch of his paſtoral charge; and as a true father of his people to procure them whatever was either for their ſpiritual or corporal welfare. He began, by putting an effectual ſtop to the frauds and injuſtices, committed in trade; particularly by falſe weights and meaſures; which, ſaid he, God abhors, as we learn from his divine word. And as he was informed, that they who had the adminiſtration of the temporalities of his church, were often biaſſed by preſents, which were made them; ſo as to be partial in the diſcharge of their office: he ſent for them, and after appointing them a larger ſalary; ſtrictly forbid them to receive any preſents

preſents from any perſon whatſoever: foraſmuch, ſaid he, as a fire ſhall conſume the houſes of them that take bribes. He was alſo informed, that many, who deſired to apply to him, with their ſuits and complaints, when labouring under injuries and oppreſſions, were hindered, or intimidated by his ſecretaries and other officers: which he conſidered as a great evil. To remedy this, he ordered a chair to be placed before the great church, with a bench on each ſide of it: where on every Wedneſday and Saturday, he attended for ſeveral hours, to give audience to all that pleaſed to come to him; to grant all that was juſt and right; and to give in charge to a proper officer to ſee that what he ordered ſhould be preſently executed. Upon which occaſion he uſed to ſay: 'If we, who are but poor mortals, are allowed 'at every hour, to go into the houſe of God, to addreſs our ſupplications to him, and to lay before 'him all our wants: though his Majeſty is incomprehenſible, and infinitely elevated above all created beings: if we are earneſt with him to hear our 'prayers, and to make haſte to help us: how ready 'ought we to be to hear the petitions, and to ſatisfy 'the demands of them that are our fellow ſervants: 'remembring that ſaying of our Lord Jeſus, *with 'what meaſure you mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you 'again?* Matt. vii. 3.'

On theſe occaſions, it was the cuſtom of our Saint, who never loved to be idle, to take with him the holy Scriptures; and to employ himſelf (whilſt he was there waiting, in order to give audience to ſuch as ſhould apply to him) either in reading the word of God, or in ſpiritual conferences, with ſome ſervants of God. One day he had ſtaid there till near noon, without being applied to by any one perſon. Upon which he withdrew, with tears in his eyes: ſaying that no one of his people had favoured him that day, by giving him any opportunity of offering ſomething

to

to Jeſus Chriſt, in order to cancel his own innumerable ſins. Sophronius a great ſervant of God, who was with him, told him he ought rather to rejoice, to ſee that God had made him his inſtrument, for to eſtabliſh ſo good a harmony, and ſo perfect a peace amongſt the ſheep committed to his charge, that there was not one amongſt them, that had any difference or conteſtation with his neighbour. For this is indeed, ſaid he, making men like to Angels.

This ſame Sophronius, and John his companion, men equally eminent both for their wiſdom, and their ſanctity, were ſent by divine providence to the aſſiſtance of our Saint. He made uſe of them upon all occaſions as his counſellers and directors: and he obeyed them with as much ſubmiſſion as if they had been his fathers. He eſteemed them, and loved them the more, becauſe of the great talent they had, in bringing back to God innumerable ſouls, who had been unhappily deluded by the Eutychian hereſy; which had greatly prevailed all over Egypt, even amongſt many of the religious. But by the means of theſe holy men, the Saint had the comfort of ſeeing in his days, not only many private houſes and families, but alſo many churches and monaſteries delivered out of the jaws of the infernal wolf, and brought home to the true fold of Chriſt, the Catholick church. For his part, he ever inculcated to all his people, to keep off from all communion in ſpirituals, with any of them that were ſeparated, by hereſy, from the communion of the church; and not ſo much as to enter into their churches, or meeting houſes; much leſs to join with them in prayer: no not even though any one's unhappy circumſtances ſhould confine him, all his life time, to a place, where he could never ſee a catholick prieſt, or receive any of the holy ſacraments. For as, ſaid he, the laws of God and man forbid that any one, who has a wife living, ſhould take another woman; how

how far off ſoever, or for how long a time ſoever, ſhe may be ſeparated from him. So he, who has been eſpouſed to Chriſt in the Catholick church, cannot without the crime of a ſpiritual adultery, upon any pretext whatſoever, engage himſelf in the communion of hereticks

Beſides the aſſiſtance our Saint received in the diſcharge of his paſtoral office, from thoſe two great men: being alſo deſirous of making himſelf partaker in the prayers and merits of the holy ſolitaries (for whoſe manner of life, though he had never been a ſolitary himſelf, he had ever a great eſteem) he aſſembled together a number of ſaint-like anchorets, out of the deſarts; whom he diſtributed into two bands, building cells for them in two chappels, which he had erected at his own charges; the one dedicated to the ever bleſſed Virgin, the other to St. John; and furniſhing them with all neceeſſaries, out of his own farms: to the end, as he told them, that whilſt he, under God, took upon himſelf the care of providing for their corporal ſuſtenance, they on their part ſhould take to heart the providing for the ſpiritual neceſſities of his ſoul; eſpecially by offering up to God in his behalf their evening and midnight devotions. Theſe foundations of the Saint, were of great edification to the faithful of Alexandria; many of whom, in different parts of the city, were excited by the example of theſe holy men, to paſs whole nights in ſinging the praiſes of God.

It would be endleſs to mark down the particulars of all the great things, which our Saint did, during the ten years of his epiſcopal adminiſtration, as well for the greater glory of God, as for the ſanctification and ſalvation of the ſouls committed to his charge: together with the many wonderful examples he gave of humility, meekneſs, patience, charity for all, even his enemies, and other Goſpel virtues. But as his diſtinguiſhing character was the virtue of mercy,

mercy, and charity, to the poor and diſtreſſed, and an unbounded liberality in point of alms-deeds: we muſt not omit ſome extraordinary inſtances of his performances in this kind. In his time Choſroes, king of Perſia, laid waſte Syria, and other parts of the eaſtern empire, and carried off a great number of Chriſtians into captivity and ſlavery. Such as could eſcape his hands, made the beſt of their way to Alexandria, and preſented themſelves, in great multitudes, to the man of God, as the known refuge of all the diſtreſſed. He received them all with open arms: and as many of them as were ſick or wounded, he placed in hoſpitals, or other lodgings, where they were all entertained at his charges, as long as they themſelves pleaſed to ſtay; and all care was taken of them. And as to the reſt, who were innumerable, he ordered his almoners, to give to all that aſked of them one piece of ſilver to every man, and two pieces of ſilver to every woman or girl, in conſideration of the weakneſs of their ſex. His almoners ſeeing the great numbers of thoſe that applied for relief, and that amongſt theſe ſome were richly clad, made a ſcruple of giving to them, and came to ſpeak to the Saint on the ſubject. But he was highly diſpleaſed, that they had not complied, to the letter, with thoſe words of our Lord, Luke vi. 30. *Give to every one that aſketh you*; and he deſired, they would not be inquiſitive, for the future, into the circumſtances of thoſe, who came to aſk alms; but would diſtribute that which belonged to Chriſt, with a bountiful hand according to the will, and commandment of Chriſt. 'But if, ſaid he, your little faith makes 'you apprehend, leſt my income ſhould not be 'ſufficient, to furniſh wherewithal to give to ſuch 'great numbers: I will by no means be a partner in 'your unbelief. And ſeeing it has pleaſed God to 'make me, tho' moſt unworthy, the diſpenſer of 'his goods; if all the men in the world were to

'come

'come to Alexandria, to beg alms; I would give to 'them all; with an entire confidence, that they 'would never be able to exhauſt his immenſe ſtores, 'nor thoſe of the church.'

Whilſt this great multitude of people was at Alexandria, one of theſe ſtrangers, (in order to make a trial of the Saint's extream charity, and compaſſion for the diſtreſſed) preſented himſelf to him, in a ragged garment, one day, when he was going to the hoſpital, to viſit the ſick (as he conſtantly did twice or thrice in the week) and begged of him, to have pity on a poor captive, and order him ſome relief. The Saint forthwith ordered his almoner, to give him ſix pieces of ſilver. He had no ſooner received this alms, but going, and changing his dreſs, he met the Saint again in another ſtreet, and caſting himſelf at his feet, told him he was a poor man in very great diſtreſs; and begged his aſſiſtance. The holy prelate then bid his almoner give him ſix pieces of gold: notwithſtanding that this officer whiſpered in his ear, and told him that it was the very ſame perſon, whom he had relieved a little before. He came again the third time, imploring ſtill the charity of the man of God: and then the almoner ſignified to him again, that it was the ſame perſon: but the Saint then bid him give him twelve pieces of gold: for poſſibly, ſaid he, this may be Jeſus Chriſt my Saviour, who is come on purpoſe to try me. In which, 'tis likely, he might allude to what had happened not long before, to St. Gregory the great.

In the mean time the Perſians, continuing to lay waſte the eaſtern provinces, drove ſtill greater numbers of people to Alexandria; to ſhelter themſelves there under the wings of the charity of our Saint: who not content with relieving all that came to him; ſent alſo very conſiderable alms to Modeſtus, the patriarch of Jeruſalem, reduced at this time to great extremities, with all his people, by the Perſians, who

who had taken that city, and burnt the churches. This alms he ſent with a letter to the patriarch; begging pardon for not ſending ſomething more worthy, as he ſaid, of the temple of God; and declaring how glad he ſhould be, if circumſtances would allow it, to come himſelf in perſon, and labour with his own hands, in rebuilding the holy church of the ſepulcher and reſurrection of our Lord: requeſting withal that he would excuſe his want of ability, and obtain for him, by his prayers, that his name might be written in the book of life.

And now this innumerable multitude of perſons, that came pouring in upon Alexandria, from all parts, had made all ſorts of proviſions exceeding dear; the more becauſe the harveſt had failed in Egypt, the Nile not having overflowed that year as uſual. The Saint, who could not endure to ſee any one in want, without aſſiſting him; in this general diſtreſs, laid out all the money he had, or could any way procure, either by begging, or borrowing of good people, till all being ſpent, no one could be found, that would lend him any more: every body apprehending, leſt by the continuance of the famine, they ſhould come themſelves to want. When behold, in theſe ſtraits, as if God had a mind to try the fidelity of his ſervant; a rich citizen, who was deſirous of being promoted to holy orders, but was hindered by the canons of the church, becauſe he had been twice married; made him an offer of two hundred thouſand buſhels of wheat, which he had ſtored up, together with a very large ſum of money, to be diſpoſed of in charities; upon condition he would diſpenſe with him in the irregularity, he had incurred, by his bigamy, and would ordain him deacon. The Saint told him, he could not admit of the offering, which he propoſed (though it could never have come in a time, in which it was more wanted) becauſe it was defective, and tainted by reaſon

reaſon of that condition which he had annexed to it; whereas the law of God required, that the ſacrifices offered to him, ſhould be clean and without blemiſh. And as to the preſent neceſſities of his brethren the poor, and thoſe of the church; he made no doubt, but that the ſame divine goodneſs, which had at all times taken care of them, and fed them, would ſtill continue to do the ſame for them, provided, ſaid he, we obſerve inviolably, what he commands us. He had no ſooner given this anſwer, and ſent away this ambitious pretender to a ſpiritual promotion; but his people came to tell him, that two of the great ſhips, belonging to the church, which he had ſent to Sicily, were juſt arrived at the port, laden with corn. Upon which the man of God proſtrated himſelf on the ground, and returned hearty thanks to our Lord, who had not only kept him from ſin, under that trial, but had immediately ſent him ſuch a ſeaſonable and abundant proviſion.

It was wonderful to ſee, on how many other occaſions, God was pleaſed to furniſh his ſervant with extraordinary ſupplies, in order to ſupport his boundleſs charities: ſo that generally ſpeaking, the more he gave away, the more he ſtill received from the divine bounty, thro' the hands of charitable Chriſtians; and ſometimes not without an evident miracle. A citizen, who after living in very good circumſtances, had been ſuddenly reduced to poverty, applied to the Saint, in the church, for an alms. He knowing him to have been not long before a wealthy man, had a great compaſſion for him; and whiſpered to his almoner, to give him fifteen pounds of gold. Which when the almoner was going to execute, he was perſwaded by the ſecretary, and the ſteward, to give him only five pounds. The Saint returning home from the church, was met by a rich widow, who put in his hands a promiſſary note, by which ſhe obliged herſelf to give him

him five hundred pieces of gold for the poor. He received the paper, and knowing in ſpirit, that this was ſent, to recompenſe the charity given to the citizen abovementioned, he enquired, and found out that his officers had only given him five pounds, inſtead of fifteen. Upon which he told them they would be anſwerable to God, for the other thouſand pieces of gold, which the good lady, that had given the note for the five hundred, had deſigned for the poor, if they had not abridged her charity, by not complying with his. And to convince them of this, he ſent for the gentlewoman, and aſked her in their preſence, if the ſum mentioned in the paper, was what ſhe had firſt deſigned to give to Jeſus Chriſt; or whether ſhe had propoſed to give him any larger ſum? She finding by this queſtion, that he had learnt from heaven all that had paſſed, being ſtruck with fear and aſtoniſhment, aſſured him, with a moſt ſolemn proteſtation, that ſhe had indeed written in the paper fifteen hundred pieces of gold; but that juſt before ſhe preſented it to him, looking into it, when ſhe was at church, ſhe found the fifteen hundred changed into five hundred; ſhe knew not how, nor by whom, for the paper had never been in any other perſon's hands, but her own, therefore ſhe had concluded it was the will of God ſhe ſhould give no more than five hundred.

A captain of a ſhip, a ſtranger, having ſuffered great loſſes at ſea, applied to the Saint, with many tears, begging he would have the ſame compaſſion for him, as he had for all others in diſtreſs. He ordered his almoners, to give him the weight of five pounds in gold: with which the man was enabled to equip out his veſſel again, and to put to ſea. But he had ſcarce got out of the haven, before a ſtorm aroſe, in which he was forced to fling all his goods over board, and with great difficulty ſaved his ſhip. He applied again to the Saint, begging he would

have pity on him, for the ſake of the Lord, who had ſhewn pity to him, and to all the world. The holy prelate told him, this misfortune had befallen him, becauſe he had mingled the charity money which he received of the church, with that which remained of his own former ill-gotten ſtock; and therefore he had loſt both. He gave him therefore now the weight of ten pounds in gold, bidding him take care not to mingle it with any other money. Thus being enabled to repair, and to load his veſſel, with a freſh cargo, he tried his fortune a ſecond time; but with worſe ſucceſs now than before: for he was caſt away upon the coaſt, and loſt both ſhip and cargo, hardly eſcaping with his life. This latter misfortune drove him into deſpair, ſo that he was even tempted to make away with himſelf. When the holy patriarch, who learnt by revelation all that had happened, ſent for him; and comforted him, aſſuring him, that the like evil ſhould happen to him no more: and that this was permitted, becauſe his ſhip itſelf was ill-gotten. Then in order to ſet him up again, he made him captain of one of the large veſſels belonging to the church of Alexandria; and ſent him out, laden with twenty thouſand buſhels of wheat. What follows is an abſtract of the account, given by the captain himſelf, with the moſt ſolemn aſſeverations, as of a moſt certain truth. 'We ſailed, ſaid he, 'for twenty days and twenty nights, with ſo violent 'ſtrong a wind, that not being able at all, either by 'the ſtars, or by the ſight of any land, to know where 'we were, we ſhould have given ourſelves up for 'loſt; had not the pilot aſſured us, he ſaw the holy 'patriarch with him at the helm, bidding him not 'to fear; for that we were in the right road. On 'the twentieth day we came within ſight of Great-'Britain; where when we put to land, we found 'a great famine. So that upon our declaring that 'we were laden with corn, the principal magiſtrate

of

'of the place told us, God had ſent us to aſſiſt them in 'their extremity: and he gave us our choice, either to 'be paid in money; or to receive the weight of our 'corn in Britiſh tin. We choſe to have one half in 'coin, the other in tin.' But ſee now a ſtill greater wonder, wrought by our Lord in favour of his Saint, and as a recompence of his charity. As ſoon as the ſhip came ſafe back to the coaſt of Egypt, ſome of this Britiſh tin was ſold by the captain to one that dealt in pewter, who by melting it down found it to be pure ſilver. Upon which when he went to reproach the captain, as if he had ſuſpected his honeſty, and meant to make a trial of him; the whole was carefully examined, and all found to be excellent ſilver.

But as on ſo many occaſions, the Saint received theſe extraordinary ſupplies, to enable him to continue his extraordinary charities: ſo was he ſometimes tried, like Job, with great loſſes; but theſe alſo were ſoon after made up to him, with intereſt. Nicetas the governor, puſhed on by ſome bad counſellers, pretending the preſſing neceſſities of the ſtate (by occaſion of the Perſian war) demanded, in the name of the emperor, and carried off all the money, which had been brought to the Saint for charitable uſes; leaving him only one hundred crowns. But on the ſame day, there came people from the coaſts of Barbary, bringing large ſums of money, ſent by charitable Chriſtians for the uſe of the patriarch. And the governor himſelf, before it was night (upon reading a paper, ſent on this occaſion by the man of God; in which he had written theſe words; 'Our Lord, who has ſaid, *I 'will not leave thee, neither will I forſake thee*, cannot 'tell a lie; becauſe he is the truth: and therefore 'a wretched man, who muſt erelong be the food of 'worms, cannot tie up the hands of God, who fur-'niſhes all his creatures with both food and life) returned all the money he had taken away, adding to it three hundred crowns of his own; and offering to under-

go what penance the patriarch ſhould be pleaſed to enjoin him, for his crime.

Another time the Saint ſuffered a very great loſs; when all the veſſels belonging to the church of Alexandria, to the number of thirteen, meeting with a violent ſtorm, in the Adriatick ſea, were conſtrained to fling overboard their whole freight, conſiſting in corn, and other goods. On this occaſion the holy patriarch ſaid with Job, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, as it hath pleaſed the Lord, ſo is it done, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* He told his friends, who came to condole with him for this loſs; that with regard to himſelf, he rather looked upon it as an advantage, than a loſs: that he imputed it all to his ſins; and to his having taken too much complacency in his alms, without ſufficiently guarding againſt the dangerous evil of vain glory: but withal that he was very ſenſible of what ſervice afflictions and humiliations are, to purify the ſoul from pride and vanity; according to that of the pſalmiſt: *'Tis good for me that thou haſt humbled me, that I may learn thy juſtifications.* Pſ. 118. However though as to his own part, he deſerved to be puniſhed, becauſe he had given occaſion by his vanity, to ſo many perſons being thus reduced to great neceſſity: yet as God was ſtill the ſame as he was in the days of Job; he truſted, that notwithſtanding his own unworthineſs, he would ſtill, in conſideration of ſo many other poor ſufferers, help them out of this diſtreſs. And this his confidence was not vain: for not long after our Lord ſent him, by one way or another, twice as much as he had loſt: all which he employed, in comforting and aſſiſting, more abundantly than ever, the poor and diſtreſſed.

One of the domeſticks of the Saint being under a preſſing neceſſity; the Saint underſtanding it, privately gave him with his own hand, the weight of two pounds in gold. Upon which, when the man told him,

him, he did not know how he ſhould be able to look him any more in the face; ſo much was he confounded at his exceeding great goodneſs to him: the Saint replied: 'Brother, I have not yet ſhed my blood for 'you, as Chriſt our common maſter, and our God 'has done for us all; and has commanded us to do 'for our brethren.'

Another citizen, being preſſed to diſcharge a debt, which he had not for the preſent the means to pay, addreſſed himſelf to a rich nobleman, begging he would lend him, upon proper ſecurity, fifty pounds of gold. He promiſed he would, but delayed the putting his promiſe in execution: ſo that the other being ſtill called upon by his creditors, and apprehending leſt they ſhould come to extremities, had recourſe to the holy patriarch, whoſe heart and hand was ever open to relieve the neceſſities of all that came to him. He had no ſooner told him his caſe; but the Saint replied: 'My ſon, if your neceſſity 'required it, I would even give you my cloaths off 'my back:' and without any delay, he lent him the whole ſum, which he wanted. The following night, the nobleman ſaw in a dream a perſon ſtanding upon an altar, and many other perſons below, who came to make their offerings to him; and for every offering which they laid upon the altar, they received of him a hundred times as much. He ſeemed alſo to ſee the holy patriarch there, coming in after him; and that there was upon a bench before them a ſum of money, which one of the ſtanders by bid him take up, and offer upon the altar, that he might receive a hundred fold: but as he was dilatory in doing it, the patriarch, who ſtood behind him, ſtept forward, and took up the offering, and put it upon the altar, and preſently received a hundred fold. The next morning the nobleman ſent for the man, and offered to let him have the money he wanted: but he told him, the holy patriarch had

been before hand with him in this good work, and in the reward of it: letting him know, how he had been obliged to have recourſe to him, and had been readily aſſiſted by him. Upon which the other declared the viſion he had ſeen, and loudly condemned himſelf, for having loſt, by his backwardneſs in doing good, that great reward which the divine bounty gives to good works done for God's ſake.

Amongſt many others, who ſeeing the boundleſs charities of the Saint, brought their money to him, to be diſpoſed of, at his diſcretion, for the relief of the poor; a man, who had an only ſon of fifteen years of age, brought him one day the weight of ſeven pounds and a half in gold, aſſuring him it was all the money he had; and only begging of him to pray for his ſon, (whom he had ſent in a ſhip to the coaſt of Africa) that God would ſave him, and bring him back with his veſſel to the haven. The Saint did not fail to pray himſelf, and to recommend earneſtly to the prayers of his clergy, the welfare of the youth, and of his veſſel; as the man had deſired. When behold, before thirty days were over, the boy was taken ill, and died: and ſoon after the ſhip (in which was alſo the brother of the ſame man) in returning home, was caſt away near the port of Alexandria: and nothing at all was ſaved, but the lives of the perſons, and the boat. The loſs of his ſon, and of his ſhip, coming ſo quickly one after the other, cauſed an inexpreſſible affliction to the poor man. The holy patriarch was alſo very much affected with it: more eſpecially becauſe of the death of this only ſon. Wherefore, not knowing what elſe to do, he begged of the *Father of mercies, and God of all conſolation*, to aſſiſt and comfort this poor afflicted parent. Then ſending to the man (for he had not the courage to ſee him, or to ſpeak to him himſelf) he deſired him not to loſe his confidence in his God; who does nothing but with juſt judgment; and orders every thing

thing, according to what he knows is beſt for us, though we know it not: and therefore he warned him to take care, leſt by any miſbehaviour of his, on this occaſion, he ſhould bereave himſelf of the great reward, which God had prepared, to recompenſe that faith, and charity he had ſhewed, in the offering he had made to God. This meſſage was followed by a dream, or viſion in the night, in which the man of God appeared to the afflicted parent in his ſleep, and ſaid to him. 'Why do you afflict yourſelf, 'brother, and ſuffer yourſelf thus to be oppreſſed with 'grief? Did you not deſire me to pray to God, to 'ſave your ſon? And behold he has ſaved him. 'For I can aſſure you, that if he had lived, he 'would have been a very lewd man. And as for 'your ſhip: if God had not been moved to mercy, 'by the good work you did, in addreſſing your 'charity to me, it would have been loſt with all the 'perſons on board; ſo that you would have loſt 'your brother alſo. Get up then, and give thanks 'to God for having preſerved the life of your bro'ther; and for having ſaved your ſon, by taking him 'to himſelf, before he was corrupted by the wicked 'ways and vanities of the world.' Upon this the man awaked, and found himſelf wonderfully comforted; and early in the morning went to the patriarch, to return thanks to God, and to him, and related to him the viſion he had ſeen. The holy man glorified God for his infinite goodneſs; and deſired the other, to attribute nothing of this to his prayers, but all to God alone, and to the faith he had in God. For this bleſſed prelate had always a very mean opinion of himſelf; as was manifeſt from all his words, and his whole comportment; and he would never ſuffer any thing of good to be aſcribed to him.

One of the principal men of the city, taking notice that the Saint, who was ſo liberal to others, al-

lowed himſelf, for his lodging, only a poor little bed on the floor, with an old tattered blanket for a covering; ſent him in one day a rich coverlet (that coſt ſix and thirty pieces of ſilver) conjuring him that he would make uſe of it for his ſake. The ſervant of God, yielding to his importunity, uſed it for one night: but as they, that lay in the ſame chamber, took notice, inſtead of ſleeping, he was all the night reproaching himſelf with lying under ſuch a rich covering, whilſt the brethren of Jeſus Chriſt, as he called the poor, were ſtarving with hunger, and cold, and deſtitute of all the commodities of life. 'And thou 'that pretendeſt to the joys of a happy eternity, ſaid 'he to himſelf, thou drinkeſt wine, thou eateſt 'good fiſh, thou art well lodged, and now like one 'of the children of this wicked world, thou art alſo, 'warmly covered, and lyeſt at thy eaſe, under a 'coverlet, that coſt ſix and thirty pieces of ſilver. 'Surely living in this unmortified manner, inſtead of 'looking for the joys of heaven in the world to come, 'thou haſt reaſon rather to apprehend that ſentence 'pronounced on the rich man, to whom it was ſaid 'Luke xvi. *Thou haſt received good things in thy life 'time, whilſt the poor received evil things: and there-'fore they are now comforted, and thou art tormented.*' The concluſion was, that he reſolved to get rid of this rich piece of furniture, the next morning, and to ſell it for the benefit of the poor: and ſo he did, without any delay. And whereas the gentleman his friend, ſeeing it expoſed for ſale, bought it again, and ſent it to him, entreating him to make uſe of it; he ſold it a ſecond time, and again gave the price of it to the poor: and ſo in like manner a third time: telling his friend, with a pleaſant countenance, 'we ſhall ſee now, which of us two ſhall be wearied 'firſt.' This gentleman was very rich, and one from whom the Saint received many things; which he gave to the poor. Upon which occaſions, he uſed

to

to ſay, it was no harm, to get all one could from the rich, for the ſervice of the poor: ſince in ſo doing, one ſerves both the one and the other; the poor, by relieving their wants, and the rich, by giving them the occaſion to purchaſe heaven by their alms.

Amongſt other exercices, and leſſons of charity, which the Saint inculcated to his people; we muſt not paſs over his ſentiments, with regard to the manner, that maſters ought to treat their ſervants. Hear how he expreſſed himſelf one day on this ſubject, to one who was cruel and inhuman to his ſlaves: 'My 'ſon, ſaid he to him, with a great deal of mildneſs, 'I underſtand that by the temptation of the enemy, 'you are apt to treat your ſervants ill: let me beg 'of you, for the time to come, to ſtay till your 'paſſion is over, before you offer to correct them. 'For God has given them to us, that they may ſerve 'us; but not for us to beat and abuſe them. And 'perhaps he may have given us them, more for the 'exerciſing our patience, in ſupporting their faults and 'defects, than for any other ſervice they can do. 'But tell me, Sir, with what price could you buy 'any one of theſe, who has the honour to have been 'created, no leſs than yourſelf, after the image and 'likeneſs of God? And though you are his maſter, 'what have you, either in body, or ſoul, that he has 'not? Give ear to St. Paul, Gal. iii. *All you that 'have been baptized in Chriſt, have put on Chriſt: there 'is no diſtinction of Jew or Gentile, bond or free—you 'are all one in Chriſt Jeſus.* Jeſus Chriſt by taking 'himſelf the form of a ſervant, has taught us, that 'we ought not to lift ourſelves up by pride over them, 'whom he has made our ſervants. For as the prophet 'teaches us Pſ. 112. There is but one great maſter 'and Lord of the univerſe, *who is high above all na- 'tions, and his glory is above the heavens: and who 'looketh down upon the low things, in heaven and in 'earth:* he does not ſay *on the high things* but *on the*

'*low*

'*low things*. And how do we pretend to domineer 'over them, who have been redeemed no leſs than 'ourſelves with the blood of our God, and of our 'maſter; and for whoſe ſervice he has made the 'heavens, the ſun, the ſtars, the earth, the ſea, and 'all the things therein; for whoſe ſervice he employs 'his angels; and for whom the Son of God has ſub-'jected himſelf to all the humiliations and torments 'of his paſſion? And ſhall you then, Sir, treat with 'contempt this man, whom God treats with honour? 'ſhall you ſtrike him, as you would do a beaſt, and 'as if you were not of the ſame nature as he? Tell 'me, would you be willing, that every time you of-'fend God, he ſhould puniſh you the ſame moment? 'I am certain you would not. How then can you 'ſay daily to God in your prayers, *forgive us our treſ-'paſſes, as we forgive them, that treſpaſs againſt us?*' Or how do you do, as you would be done by?

This charity, which the Saint inculcated to others, he ever practiſed himſelf; without excepting his very enemies, or thoſe who had injured, or wronged him, or his. On the contrary, he ſhewed greater favours, to ſuch as theſe, that he might overcome evil with good. He even humbled himſelf ſometimes to impenitent ſinners, by caſting himſelf at their feet, and begging their pardon (where the fault was wholly theirs, and not his) that by this means, he might bring them to a reconciliation with God, and his church.

One day a beggar, having aſked an alms of the holy patriarch, he ordered them that accompanied him to give him ten pieces of braſs. The man, who expected more, inſtead of thanks, returned him very abuſive language, and treated him in a moſt inſolent manner. They that were preſent, were moved to indignation, and would have puniſhed the wretch upon the ſpot. But the Saint ſeverely reproved them, and bid them 'Let him ſay on what he had a mind to 'ſay. For why ſhould not I, my brethren, ſaid he,

'ſuffer

'ſuffer this ſmall injury, from a poor man; I who 'for theſe ſixty years have been continually offending, 'and injuring my God, by my ſins?

Amongſt other charities, the Saint alſo founded ſeveral hoſpitals: and when there was a great mortality at Alexandria, he was very aſſiduous in attending ſuch as were at the point of death, and aſſiſting them in their agony. He was alſo very diligent in ordering prayers for the ſouls of the faithful departed. And in recommendation of this charity, and as a proof of the efficacy of ſuch prayers as theſe; he related what had happened not long before, to a countryman of his; who had been carried away captive by the Perſians, and caſt into a priſon called Lethe, or Oblivion. His friends, having heard that he was dead, procured prayers to be ſaid, three times in the year, for the repoſe of his ſoul: at which times, as he aſſure them, when after four years, he made his eſcape out of priſon, and returned home to them; he was always viſited, and comforted by a perſon ſhining like the ſun; and was delivered on thoſe occaſions from his chains, for the whole day.

The Saint recommended very much to his people, the remembrance of death, as a moſt wholſome meditation for all men. And having been told, that on the day of the coronation of the emperor, ſeveral pieces of marble of different ſorts, were preſented to him, that he might chooſe the kind, which he would have employed for his tomb; to the end, that being ever mindful of his mortality, and of his ſpeedy return to duſt, he might not ſuffer himſelf to be pufft up with pride; but take care to live, and to govern, ſo, as to be always prepared for his laſt end: he alſo, with the ſame intention, gave orders to have a ſepulchre prepared for himſelf, amongſt the tombs of the patriarchs his predeceſſors; but that it ſhould not be finiſhed till his death: in the mean time he deſired that the workmen, upon certain ſolemn days, ſhould come,

come, and tell him, in preſence of all his clergy: 'My 'lord, your tomb remains imperfect, give orders 'if you pleaſe, that it may be finiſhed: ſince you 'know not the hour, as the ſcripture ſays, when the 'thief ſhall come.' He alſo often entertained his friends, that came to viſit him, with this ſame ſubject, of the continual thought we ought to have of death, and of that ſeparation which ſhall then be of the ſoul from the body. 'I am of opinion, ſaid 'he, that the means to work out our ſalvation, is to 'be always thinking with ſorrow, of the hour of our 'death: to conſider well, that we ſhall have no one 'to ſhare with us the pains and conflicts, we muſt 'then go through: that all the world ſhall abandon 'us at that hour, only our good works ſhall not 'abandon us: to think what our aſtoniſhment and 'trouble ſhall be, if at our departure hence, we are 'not prepared for our trial: to reflect that it will 'be in vain then to aſk for a little more time to do 'penance in; when we ſhall be reproached, for having had ſo much, and made ſuch ill uſe of it. And 'how, ſaid he, ſhall poor John (for ſo he commonly called himſelf) eſcape the claws of thoſe cruel 'beaſts, that ſhall watch to catch him, at his departure hence? What ſhall he do, when he ſhall 'ſee before him thoſe bands of evil ſpirits; who 'ſhall ſtrictly examine him, and charge home upon 'him all the evil he had done?' Which he ſaid, alluding to a viſion, in which St. Simeon Stylites had ſeen in ſpirit, how at the time of the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body, when ſhe would willingly fly up towards heaven, ſhe meets with devils in her way, divided into different companies, according to the different vices, which they uſually ſuggeſt: and that the demons of pride examine the ſoul upon the ſins committed in that kind; thoſe of impurity examine her upon all her carnal ſins, and impure delectations; thoſe of detraction, upon every word, that has pro-

proceeded out of her mouth againſt her neighbour; and ſo of all her other ſins. This viſion our Saint had often in mind: as alſo that paſſage of the life of St. Hilarion, of the fear and apprehenſion he had, and the words he ſpoke to his ſoul, when he was upon the point of death. And therefore he would often be ſaying to himſelf: 'If ſo great a Saint, who had 'ſerved our Lord for ſuch a number of years, who 'had wrought ſo many miracles, and even raiſed 'the dead to life, yet apprehended ſo much that 'dreadful hour, what ſhalt thou be able to ſay, or 'what ſhalt thou be able to do, when thou ſhalt 'find thyſelf encompaſſed with thoſe cruel and un-'merciful examiners of all thy actions? What 'ſhalt thou be able to anſwer to ſuch of theſe unhap-'py ſpirits, as ſhall examine thee, with regard to 'thy lies, or thy detraction, or thy hardheartedneſs, 'or thy avarice, or thy remembrance of injuries, or 'thy ill will, *&c.* O good God, let thy almighty 'hand defend me at that hour, from all the efforts 'of theſe enemies of my ſalvation! Let thy goodneſs 'ſend thy Angels to guide me, and conduct me ſafe 'in this laſt great and dangerous journey, from time 'to eternity!' Such were the ſentiments of our Saint, in his entertainments upon this moſt intereſting ſubject, of the ſoul's paſſage out of this world, into the other.

St. John had now for ten years, as *a burning and a ſhining light*, illuſtrated the church of Alexandria: when the time drawing near, in which our Lord was to take him to himſelf, he reſigned his patriarchal ſee, and retired into his native country of Cyprus, in order to prepare himſelf there for eternity. As ſoon as he arrived at Amathus, the city in which he was born, having a foreknowledge by revelation of his approaching death, he made his laſt will and teſtament to this effect: 'I John, who was born a ſlave to ſin, 'but have been made a free man, by the grace of my God,

'God, who without any deſerts of mine, has raiſed 'me to the prieſtly dignity; return thee moſt hum-'ble thanks, O Lord, that thou haſt vouchſafed to 'hear the prayer, I have made to thee, that I ſhould 'not poſſeſs at my death, any more than one ſmall 'piece of money: and that whereas when I was 'made biſhop, I had great treaſures at my diſpoſal; 'and have received ſince immenſe ſums from thy 'ſervants, thou haſt always made me ſenſible that 'all this ſtore was thine, and haſt done me the fa-'vour, ever to give back to thee without delay, 'what belonged to thee: therefore as this piece of 'money, which remains, belongs alſo to thee, no 'leſs than all the reſt; I deſire it may be likewiſe 'returned to thee, by putting it into the hands of 'the poor.'

St. John the Almoner, departed to our Lord in the ſixty-fourth year of his age, anno 616. His body was enterred in the church of Amathus, in the chappel of St. Tychon, formerly biſhop of that ſee, where many miracles were afterwards wrought by his interceſſion. His name is recorded in the Roman martyrology on the twenty-third of January.

St. SYNCLETICA.

From her ancient life, by a writer of the ſame age, believed by many, to have been St. Athanaſius.

St. Syncletica was born at Alexandria (in the latter part of the third century) of Chriſtian parents, rich and noble according to the world: whom God had bleſſed with four children; two ſons, and two daughters. One of the ſons died very young: the other, having attained to the age of twenty-five, when, at the deſire of his parents, he was contracted to a young lady, and all things were prepared for the ſolemnizing of the marriage; was ſuddenly carried off by death, into another region, where *they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.* Syncletica, the eldeſt of the two daughters, from her tender years conſecrated her heart to the love of Chriſt; and accuſtomed herſelf, to the exerciſes of Chriſtian piety, and ſolid devotion; taking always far more care of the ſoul than of the body. As ſhe advanced in age, ſhe grew up in virtue, and in the love of purity; which determined her to chooſe no other ſpouſe but Jeſus Chriſt. For the love of him, ſhe rejected the moſt advantageous offers that could be made her, according to the world: and inſtead of the outward ornaments of the body, which thoſe of her age and quality are uſually ſo fond of, ſhe diligently procured the better ornaments of the inward houſe of her ſoul; where ſhe deſired to entertain the king of kings, who is beautiful above the ſons of men. Hence ſhe carefully ſhunned all dangerous worldly diverſions, and all unprofitable converſations; but loved always the converſation of ſuch as entertained her with godly diſcourſes, and with exhortations to piety: to theſe ſhe hearkened with diligent attention; laying up their words in her memory, and meditating

meditating often upon them. In the mean time ſhe was exceeding temperate, and mortified in her eating and drinking; looking upon this virtue as the beſt preſervative of purity: and though her faſtings and abſtinences made her lean and pale, ſhe minded it not: being not deſirous to pleaſe the eyes of men, but of God; and finding by experience that what weakened the body ſerved to ſtrengthen the ſoul. However ſhe was always diſcreet in theſe corporal mortifications; and took all poſſible care to conceal them, from being ſeen, and obſerved by others.

Her parents dying, left her miſtreſs of all their worldly ſubſtance. So that now finding herſelf at full liberty, to follow the call of God; and to retire altogether from the world: after having made a ſufficient trial of herſelf, by way of preparation for thoſe auſterities ſhe deſigned to embrace: ſhe diſpoſed of all her wealth in favour of the poor; and cutting off her hair, in token of her renouncing the world, and all its ſuperfluities; ſhe withdrew herſelf from the town, and choſe for her dwelling place, for the remainder of the days of her mortality, a ſepulchre, or monument, in the neighbourhood: taking alſo along with her, her younger ſiſter, who was deſirous of following the ſame kind of life. Here ſhe lived ſeparated in a manner from all converſation, either of men or women, in the exercices of mortification and penance, and continual prayer. Her food was coarſe bread, made of bran; her ordinary drink was water; ſhe often lay upon the bare ground: and as the watchful enemy plied her with frequent and troubleſome temptations; ſhe oppoſed to all his aſſaults the buckler of faith, with the helmet of hope, and confidence in our Lord; to whom ſhe had continual recourſe: and on theſe occaſions, ſhe redoubled her auſterities, in order to keep the fleſh in ſubjection: yet ſo as ſtill to have an eye upon the *ſalt* of prudence and diſcretion, with which our Lord will

will have all *ſacrifices ſeaſoned*, which we offer to him. *Levit.* ii. 13. Far from conceiving a good opinion of herſelf, for having quitted her worldly goods; ſhe kept herſelf always humble, by thinking, ſhe was ſtill at a very great diſtance from what ſhe ought to be. And not contenting herſelf with that voluntary poverty, which ſhe had embraced, when ſhe renounced all exteriour poſſeſſions; ſhe made it her chiefeſt labour, to purify her ſoul from all deſires and affections to any thing created, and from all the ſpiritual vices, that are apt to lurk in the interiour.

Notwithſtanding that ſhe ſought with all her power to hide her virtues from the eyes of others; and to avoid, as much as poſſible, all commerce with the world: yet ſhe could not keep herſelf ſo concealed, but that the ſweet odour of her ſaintly life, breaking forth from her ſepulchre, ſpread itſelf by degrees over all the neighbourhood: God almighty ſo ordering it for his own greater glory, and for the good of a great number of ſouls. Hence many devout virgins came to viſit her, deſiring to profit by her heavenly converſation; and to learn of her the leſſons of a truly chriſtian life, and of religious perfection. At firſt her humility would not ſuffer her to open her mouth, to give them the inſtructions they deſired: but when they preſſed her to ſpeak to them of divine matters, ſhe contented herſelf with edifying them by her ſilence, by her ſighs, and by her tears: till at length, her charity prevailing over her humility, ſhe yielded to their importunity, and gave them many excellent leſſons, for the regulating of their lives: ſet down at large, by my author in her life; as a rule for holy virgins, that aſpire after religious perfection; of whom this great Saint is commonly looked upon the mother, and foundreſs.

She begins by recommending to them, as the principal leſſon of all, to have always before their eyes,

and to imprint deep in their hearts, the commandments of God; especially these two: *thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart* &c. *And thy neighbour as thyself*: which she tells them are an abridgment of the whole divine law; and comprize all that God desires of us, and all perfection. That in the exercice of this divine love, those that desire to dedicate themselves to God, must set themselves no bounds; but must endeavour always to advance: that they must not content themselves, with being the land that bringeth forth only *thirtyfold*; but must labour to bring forth *sixty*, and a *hundredfold*. That as it would be infinitely dangerous for them, to fall from a higher degree of virtue to a lower; from bringing forth sixty, to bring forth only thirty; because it is so natural, when once one begins to sink downwards, to fall lower and lower, till one is carried headlong down the precipice; so must they never think of standing still in the way of God, (which would in effect be going backwards) but as the Apostle admonishes Philip iii. 13. 14. *forgetting the things that are behind them, and stretching forth themselves to those that are before, should still be pressing forward towards the mark, to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

In the next place, she tells them, that in order to preserve and maintain the purity of their souls and bodies, they must exercise themselves, in the mortification of their sensual appetite: and this not only with regard to their eating and drinking; but also with relation to the guard, they ought always to keep upon their eyes, their ears, their tongue, &c. lest the angels of darkness, who are the robbers and murderers, that are always seeking, to do what mischief they can to our souls, should steal into the soul by any of these avenues, if they should be left unguarded. Therefore she recommends to them a spirit of recollection and retirement; and to have as little communication as possible with the world. For how, says she, can a house escape

eſcape being ſullied, and made black by the ſmoak, which ſurrounds it, on all ſides, abroad, if the doors and windows are always open to let it in? She adds, that they muſt, according to our Lord's preſcription, be ever *wiſe as ſerpents, and harmleſs as doves:* wiſely watching againſt all the deceits and aſſaults of the wicked one, who is ever beſieging them within and without; and in all their actions, keeping cloſe to God, by purity and ſimplicity, both in their intention and affection: and that the arms they muſt continually make uſe of in this warfare, are the exercices of a ſpiritual life, more eſpecially faſting and fervent prayer.

She proceeds to treat of the advantages of voluntary poverty, and of leaving all things for Chriſt: ſhewing that nothing can be of greater ſervice than this to a ſoul, that has, by the exercice of other virtues, and by the cuſtom of mortifying herſelf, in eating, drinking, hard lodging, &c. firſt learnt to be content with little, and to be willing to give up her own will, her inclinations and pleaſures for God. For when we have renounced all the periſhable goods of the earth, we eaſily learn to turn our eyes towards heaven; and to ſeek that hidden treaſure alone, which is able to make us rich, for eternity, in the happy poſſeſſion of God himſelf. And what a ſhame it is, ſaid ſhe, that we ſhould not be ready, to undergo all kind of labours and ſufferings, for acquiring ſuch a treaſure as this, when we daily ſee the children of this world, expoſe themſelves to far greater labours, ſufferings and dangers, for the ſake of a little worldly dirt.

She alſo warns them againſt making a ſhow of their virtues, or publiſhing their good actions, by talking of them to others: for as a treaſure, that is expoſed in public, to the eyes of all; is quickly taken away and loſt; ſo virtue preſently fades, and quite evaporates, when one makes a ſhow of it, or publiſhes it to the world. Praiſe and applauſe are apt to weaken the vigour of the ſoul: which on the other hand commonly

receives greater ſtrength, from affronts, reproaches and injuries. She therefore would have them rejoice, under ſuch ſufferings, as theſe: and as for ſadneſs in general, ſtrive to drive it far away from them, as an enemy, by prayer, and ſpiritual canticles; that wholeſome ſorrow only excepted, *which is according to God*; and by which we grieve for our offending him.

She goes on, by recommending very much to them, a conſtant watchfulneſs over themſelves; and that they be ever fearful, and miſtruſtful of themſelves; and never think themſelves ſecure in this life. Upon which occaſion, ſhe treats at large of the excellence and neceſſity of ſelf-knowledge and humility: and warns them againſt the pernicious evil of pride (which ſhe tells them is the moſt heinous of all ſins) and againſt all ſelf-conceit and preſumption, and all the reſt of the daughters of pride; ſuch as the paſſion of anger, the reſentment and remembrance of injuries, the vices of envy and detraction: all which being ſpiritual ſins, are often overlooked and neglected; and yet are apt to leave behind them mortal wounds, in the moſt noble parts of the ſoul: wounds the more hard to be cured, as they are generally leſs apprehended.

The Saint alſo gave her ſpiritual daughters many other excellent documents; which the author of her life has ſet down at large: who aſſures us, that what ſhe taught them by words, ſhe continually enforced by her actions and examples: and that no tongue was capable of expreſſing the ſpiritual advantages, that all thoſe that were ſo happy as to ſee and hear her, received from her heavenly converſation; and the incredible fruits, which by her means were produced in many ſouls.

Syncletica continued her regular exercices of devotion and penance, advancing daily more and more in the love of God, till ſhe was arrived at the age of fourſcore years. At which time our Lord was pleaſed to permit her, to be afflicted with moſt violent interiour pains and diſeaſes, joined with horrible temptations; as if Satan

Satan had obtained leave from God, to try and torment her, as he did Job, with a complication of the rudeſt and ſevereſt ſufferings. She paſſed through this courſe of penance, for the ſpace of three years and a half, with an incredible patience, and courage, to the great edification of all that came near her: to whom ſhe ceaſed not to preach both by word and example. In the latter part of this time, to the reſt of her ſufferings, was added that of a cancer in her mouth; which ſpread itſelf ſo as to eat up a great part of her face; and beſides the pain, and the inſupportable ſtench which it cauſed, hindered her from being able either to eat, or to ſpeak. In this condition, ſhe continued ſuffering, like a martyr, for the ſpace of three months; ſupported only by divine grace: till the end of her life approaching, ſhe was favoured with a rapt, or extaſy, in which ſhe ſaw the glory and light of the heavenly manſions, which were prepared for her; and troops of Angels and holy virgins, who invited her to come, and join their happy company. Returning to herſelf, ſhe found herſelf able, to give her laſt inſtructions, to the virgins, that were about her: exhorting them particularly to conſtancy, courage and perſeverance, in their holy undertaking: and telling them, that within three days, at the hour, which ſhe named, ſhe ſhould be taken away from them. Accordingly when that hour came, her pure ſoul took its flight from this vale of tears, and went to take poſſeſſion of the kingdom of her heavenly bridegroom. Her name is recorded in the Roman martyrology, on the fifth of January.

St. THAIS, the Penitent.

From an ancient Greek Writer.

THAIS was a native of Egypt, who being exceeding beautiful, was ſo unhappy, as to be betrayed, and proſtituted by her own mother, to infamy and ſin. She followed a moſt wicked courſe of life for a long time: and by reaſon of her extraordinary beauty, was the ruin of many; who ſpent their fortunes on her; and frequently quarrelled about her; inſomuch, that murders were ſometimes committed on her occaſion. There lived at this time, in a neighbouring deſart, a holy abbot, called Paphnucius: who hearing of the wretched life ſhe led, and of the havock ſatan, by her means, made amongſt the youth of that part of Egypt, was inſpired with a deſire, and deſign to attempt her converſion. For this purpoſe, procuring a ſecular habit, and taking ſome money with him, he went to the place, where ſhe lived: and deſiring to ſpeak to her in private, was introduced by her into a chamber richly furniſhed. He aſked, if ſhe had not ſome more retired apartment? She ſaid, ſhe had. But what was he afraid of? for as for men; ſhe aſſured him, no mortal could ſee them, or come in upon them, where they were: and as for God, he would equally ſee them, wherever they went? O! ſaid he, doſt thou then believe there is a God; whoſe all-ſeeing eye is always upon us? Yes, Sir, ſaid ſhe, I do believe, there is an all-ſeeing God: and what is more, I do believe there is a heaven, where the good ſhall be rewarded with never ending bliſs; and that there is alſo a hell, where the wicked ſhall be tormented for all eternity.

Paphnucius, glad to hear her make this profeſſion of her faith, began to repreſent to her the diſmal ſtate of her ſoul, and the dreadful account ſhe muſt give one day, for the ſouls of ſo many others, whom ſhe had drawn

drawn into ſin: and this in ſo pathetick a manner, and with that powerful unction, and bleſſing of divine grace; that, perceiving him to be a man of God, ſhe caſt herſelf at his feet, all bathed in her tears; and gave herſelf up to be directed by him: offering herſelf to go through whatſoever penance, he ſhould think proper to appoint for her; and that in what place he pleaſed, and without delay. Hoping, as ſhe ſaid, that God would ſhew her mercy, through his prayers. Paphnucius named her the place, where ſhe ſhould come to him; and went his way: and ſhe prepared herſelf to follow him. But firſt ſhe gathered together all ſhe had acquired by ſin, and all the rich preſents of her lovers; and made a bonfire of them all, in the middle of the ſtreet; in the ſight of all the people, and of them, that had been the accomplices of her crimes: declaring aloud her deteſtation of her wicked life; and of every thing, that had ſerved to detain her in that criminal way. Having made this firſt ſacrifice, ſhe repaired to the place, which Paphnucius had named: and he took her along with him to a monaſtery of nuns; where he ſhut her up in a cell by herſelf; and ſtopt up the door: only leaving a ſmall window, through which he deſired the ſiſters to convey to her a little bread and water every day; which was to be her whole allowance for the remainder of her life.

She aſked him, before they parted, what prayers he would recommend to her: and in what manner he would have her addreſs herſelf to God in prayer? Thou art not worthy, ſaid he, to name the holy name of God with thy polluted lips; nor to ſtretch forth thy hands, or lift up thy eyes to heaven, after ſo many abominations. But let it be enough for thee, to ſit turned towards the Eaſt; and frequently to repeat theſe words: *Thou that haſt made me have mercy on me.*

She continued this courſe of penance for three years, ſhut up in this manner: till Paphnucius, having compaſſion for her, went to conſult the great St. Antony,

(at that time the oracle of Egypt) to learn of him, whether God had accepted of her penance, and forgiven her her ſins. St. Antony aſſembled together his diſciples, and recommended to them all, to beg earneſtly of God, that he would be pleaſed to let them know the thing, that Paphnucius inquired after. They did ſo; and St. Paul the Simple ſaw that night in a viſion, a glorious throne, or bed of ſtate, in heaven, ſurrounded by three virgins, glittering with beams of heavenly light. And as he was thinking with himſelf, that this throne could be deſigned for no other, but his father Antony. He was anſwered by a voice: 'It 'is not for thy father Antony, but for Thais, the harlot.' This viſion being notified to Paphnucius, he concluded, it was the will of God, that Thais ſhould be releaſed from her confinement: and therefore he opened the door to let her out. She, for her part, deſired to remain always there; but humbly acquieſced to the will of her holy director. He told her, God had forgiven her ſins. And ſhe aſſured him, that from the time ſhe had firſt entered into that cell, ſhe had collected together all her ſins, as it were into one heap; and had placed them there before her eyes; and had never ceaſed to think on them, and to bewail them.

'Tis on account of this your contrition, ſaid Paphnucius, God has ſhewed you mercy; and not for the rigour of your penance. She lived no longer than fifteen days, after ſhe was taken out of her penitential encloſure: and then ſhe was called to ſee *the good things of our Lord in the land of the living.*

ST.

St. PELAGIA, the Penitent.

From her life, by James the deacon, her cotemporary.

PELAGIA, was a famous actreſs, in the city of Antioch, the capital at that time of Syria, and of all the Orient. Her extraordinary beauty drew after her many lovers; and ſhe was ſo unhappy, as to yield herſelf up to a very ſinful courſe of life, without the leaſt reſtraint: though ſhe profeſſed a belief in Chriſt, and had formerly been admitted into the number of catechumens, who were under inſtruction for baptiſm: but now had left all off, and never came near the church. It happened at this time (about the beginning of the fifth century) that divers biſhops, and others of the clergy, were aſſembled at Antioch, upon ſome eccleſiaſtical affairs: amongſt whom was the holy prelate Nonnus, who from a monk of the monaſtery of Tabenna, was for his admirable virtue, and wiſdom, made biſhop of Heliopolis. Theſe prelates were lodged in the neighbourhood of the church of St. Julianus the martyr; where they met together, to treat upon the affairs, that had called them to Antioch. One day, as they were ſitting before the church, and St. Nonnus was entertaining them with a ſpiritual conference, to the great edification of all, that heard him: Pelagia paſſed before them, with great pomp, decked up with gold, perles, and precious ſtones; and accompanied with a numerous train of young men and young women. Her beauty, with the luſtre of her jewels, and her rich attire, drew upon her the eyes of all the fond admirers of theſe empty toys: but the prelates turned away their faces from her; the more, becauſe they were offended with the immodeſty of her dreſs; ſhe having no veil over her head, and her very ſhoulders being uncovered. Only Nonnus ſeemed to take much notice of her, and to conſider her with great attention. After

ter ſhe was paſſed, turning to his fellow-biſhops, he ſaid to them, with many ſighs and tears: 'I fear, God 'will one day bring this woman, to confront us be- 'fore the throne of his juſtice; in order to condemn 'our negligence and tepidity, in his ſervice; and in 'the diſcharge of our duty to the flock, he has com- 'mitted to our care. For how many hours, do you 'think, ſhe has employed this very day in her cham- 'ber, in waſhing and cleanſing herſelf, in dreſſing, 'adorning, and ſetting out her whole perſon to the 'beſt advantage, in order to ſhew forth her beauty, to 'pleaſe the eyes of the world, and particularly her un- 'happy lovers, who are alive to day, and poſſibly may 'be dead to morrow? Whereas we, who have an al- 'mighty Father in heaven; an immortal ſpouſe, to 'whoſe love and ſervice we have conſecrated ourſelves; 'we, to whom the immenſe and eternal treaſures of 'heaven are promiſed, for the reward of our ſhort la- 'bours upon earth, are far from taking the like pains, 'to waſh and purify our ſouls from their ſtains, and to 'procure for them thoſe bright ornaments of virtue, 'and ſanctity; which alone can render them truly 'agreeable in the eyes of our Lord.' Having ſpoken to this effect, he roſe up, and returned to his lodging; and there proſtrating himſelf on the floor, bitterly la- mented his miſery, in having ſuffered himſelf to be thus outdone by a ſinful woman; and implored the divine mercy, for the forgiveneſs of this his negligence and tepidity.

The next day, being Sunday, all the biſhops aſſem- bled in the great church, where the patriarch of An- tioch celebrated maſs. After the goſpel was read, he preſented the book to St. Nonnus, and deſired him to make an exhortation to the people. The holy prelate obeyed, and made a moſt moving diſcourſe, full of the unction of the Spirit of God, on the ſubject of the laſt judgment, and of the world to come; which drew tears from the eyes of all his auditory. The divine

mercy-

mercy had drawn thither Pelagia alſo, who had not been within a church of a long time before: and this ſermon made ſo deep an impreſſion on her ſoul, that ſhe could not help ſighing, and ſobbing, and pouring out floods of tears, through the ſenſe it gave her of her ſins. As ſoon as the divine ſervice was over, ſhe ſent a letter to the holy prelate, to this effect. 'To the holy diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt, from a ſinful wretch, a ſcholar of the devil. I have learnt, that the God, whom you worſhip, came down from heaven to the earth, not for the ſake of the juſt, but to ſave poor ſinners: that he humbled himſelf ſo far, as to ſuffer publicans to come to him; and did not diſdain to ſpeak with the ſinful Samaritan woman, at the well. Wherefore, as I underſtand, that though you never have ſeen him, with your mortal eyes, you are a follower of his, and have ſerved him faithfully, for many years; I conjure you, for his ſake, to ſhew yourſelf to be his true diſciple, by ſuffering a poor ſinner to come to you; and not deſpiſe the extreme deſire I have, to approach to him, by your aſſiſtance.' The Saint ſent her word, that if ſhe was ſincere in her deſires of inſtruction and converſion, ſhe might come to him, to the church of St. Julianus, where he would ſpeak to her, in the preſence of the other biſhops; not thinking it proper, to converſe with her in private.

Pelagia had no ſooner received this permiſſion, but ſhe went, running all the way, to the church of St. Julianus; and there caſt herſelf at the feet of the holy prelate: earneſtly begging of him, by the example of his great maſter, to receive the worſt of ſinners, and to cleanſe her from all her filth, and abominations, in the fountain of baptiſm. The Saint told her, that by the diſcipline of the church, perſons like her, who had been a long time engaged in criminal habits, could not be admitted to baptiſm, without giving proper ſureties; who ſhould anſwer for their returning no more to their ſinful ways. She not being able, to bear the enor-

enormous weight of her ſins, or to continue any longer under the filth of them, was unwilling to hear of any delay: but embracing the feet of the ſervant of God, and waſhing them with whole floods of tears, ſhe conjured him, to baptize her upon the ſpot: that ſhe might be preſently freed from her crimes, and regenerated to a new life; and ſo preſented without ſpot to Jeſus Chriſt. And this ſhe begged with ſo much inſtance, and with ſuch demonſtrations of a lively faith, and of an ardent deſire of ſaving her ſoul; that the prelates were all of opinion, that the hand of God ſhewing itſelf here in ſuch an extraordinary manner, her requeſt ought to be admitted. They ſent therefore to acquaint the patriarch with all that had paſſed; who approved of her being baptized: and ſent, the lady Romana, the chiefeſt of the widows, that were in the ſervice of the great church, to attend her as godmother on this occaſion. This good lady found her ſtill (bewailing her ſins) at the feet of the Saint: from which ſhe would not be removed, till he commanded her to riſe, in order to proceed to the exorciſms, and prayers uſed by the church before baptiſm. After which, and a public confeſſion and deteſtation of all her crimes, he baptized her: and then, according to the cuſtom of the church in thoſe days, he alſo adminiſtred to her the ſacraments of confirmation, and of the body of our Lord.

That ſame day, as my author relates, who was himſelf preſent (being deacon to St. Nonnus) when the holy biſhop and he were at table together, rejoicing, with the Angels, upon the converſion of ſo great a ſinner; they heard diſtinctly before the door a voice, as of one bitterly complaining, in theſe or the like words. 'Alas! alas! muſt I continually be tormented in this manner, by this crazy old fellow? Art 'thou not content with having robbed me hereto'fore of no fewer than thirty thouſand ſouls, of the 'nation of the Saracens; which thou haſt preſented to 'thy

'thy God? Is it not enough for thee, to have alſo 'ſnatched out of my hands the city of Heliopolis, 'which was mine; and where all the people wor-'ſhipped me? Muſt thou alſo take away from me now 'the greateſt hope I had left? And doſt thou think, I 'will always bear with thee; or ſupport any longer 'the perſecutions thou makeſt me ſuffer?' Thus ſatan expreſſed his grief, at the loſs of his prey, and his rage againſt the holy prelate: who took no notice of him; but armed his convert againſt all the efforts and temptations of this enemy; and taught her to drive him away, by a confidence in her Saviour, and by the ſign of his holy croſs.

The third day after her baptiſm, Pelagia having taken an inventary of all her plate, jewels, rich clothes, and other goods, put it into the hands of St. Nonnus, ſaying: 'my lord, here is the whole of the goods, I 'have acquired from the devil. I give them all up to 'your diſpoſal: give your orders about them, as you 'ſhall judge to be for the beſt. For my part, I deſire 'no other riches, for the time to come, but thoſe of 'my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.' The holy prelate ſent forthwith for the treaſurer of the church, and delivering the inventary into his hands, charged him, as he ſhould anſwer it to God, to divert no part of thoſe goods to the ſervice, either of the biſhop, or of the church: but to diſtribute all to poor widows and orphans, and ſuch like objects: that if they had been ill gotten, they might now at leaſt be well employed. On the ſame day, Pelagia ſet at liberty all her ſlaves, both men and women: earneſtly exhorting them, to ſhake off at the ſame time that yoke of ſervitude, by which they had jointly with her been ſlaves to this corrupt and ſinful world: that ſo they might paſs over to the true liberty of the children of God; and come one day with her to the enjoyment of that true and eternal life, which knows neither ſorrow, nor ſin.

On

On the eighth day, when thoſe that had been baptiſed, according to the ancient cuſtom of the church, put off the white garment, they received at their baptiſm; Pelagia, riſing privately in the night, exchanged her white garment, for a long habit of haircloth, and an old mantle, which ſhe had received from St. Nonnus; and without communicating her deſign to any one, but him; ſhe withdrew herſelf from Antioch: and going into the Holy land, ſhe took up her habitation for life, in a narrow cell, upon mount Olivet: where ſhe lived as an anchoret, ſhut up in ſuch a manner, as to have only a ſmall window, through which ſhe might receive the neceſſaries of life: and ſpending her time wholly with our Lord in faſting and prayer. The other religious, inhabitants of this holy mountain, knew not who ſhe was; nor ſo much as that ſhe was a woman: for ſhe had concealed her ſex, calling herſelf by the name of Pelagius: but all of them admired the great abſtraction, auſterity, and ſanctity of her life.

Some years after this, my author James the deacon, made a pilgrimage of devotion, to viſit the ſepulchre of our Lord at Jeruſalem. Upon this occaſion his holy biſhop recommended to him, to inquire after a ſervant of God, named Pelagius, that led an anachoretical life upon mount Olivet. He executed his commiſſion, little thinking, that this anchoret was the famous Pelagia, whom he had ſeen baptiſed, and who preſently after diſappeared, and was heard of no more. And though he readily found out the cell, by inquiring of the religious, who dwelt in the neighbourhood; and went and ſpoke to her through the window; yet ſhe was ſo far altered by her auſterities that he knew her not. He told her, he came by the deſire of biſhop Nonnus, to enquire after her. Nonnus, ſaid ſhe, is a great Saint: and I beg, that he will pray for me. With that ſhe ſhut her window, and began to ſing Tierce, or the third hour of the divine office: whilſt the deacon was praying without; much comforted with having

having ſeen ſo holy a perſon. Afterwards viſiting the monaſteries round about, and finding that all the ſervants of God, wherever he came, conſpired in giving teſtimony to the wonderful ſanctity of Pelagius. He reſolved to return, to viſit this holy anchoret once more, before he left the country; in order to receive ſome wholeſome inſtructions from him. When he came to the cell, and knockt at the window; no one opened it to him: and when he called, no one anſwered: ſo that having continued for ſome time knocking and calling; he began to think the anchoret was gone away. At length he forced open the window; and looking in, he perceived the Saint was dead. He gave notice to the neighbouring religious, who came, and opening the cell, took out the body, in order to its being enterred, with all the honour due to ſo great a ſervant of God. And now the ſecret being diſcovered, and noiſed abroad, all the holy virgins, that dwelt in the monaſteries of Jericho, and on the bank of the Jordan, in the place, where our Lord was baptiſed, came out with lighted candles in their hands, ſinging hymns and pſalms, to meet the corpſe of the Saint, which they conducted to their church; and there depoſited as a rich treaſure.

Her name is recorded in the Roman martyrology, on the eighth of October; and the name of St. Nonnus, on the ſecond of December.

S T.

St. MARY of Egypt.

From her life, written by S. Sophronius, patriarch of Jeruſalem.

THERE was in a monaſtery of Paleſtine, a holy prieſt, called Zoſimus, who from his childhood had dedicated himſelf to the love of God; and had ſpent three and fifty years in that community, in the exercices of a monaſtick life, with ſuch perfection, as to be worthily admired by all that knew him. This good father, being one day tempted with a thought, as if nothing more were now wanting to him, as being already arrived, as he imagined, at the top of the hill of religious perfection; was admoniſhed by one, appearing to him in the ſhape of a man, of the errour, he was in; and was directed by this meſſenger of heaven to another monaſtery, more remote from all converſation with the world, and ſituated in a loneſome place, on the banks of the river Jordan, in order to his learning there ſtill higher leſſons in the ſchool of religion. In this place, he found a company of Angels rather than men: ſo great was their fervour in all that related to the ſervice of God. His divine praiſes were ſung there, every hour of the night: and in the day, whilſt their hands were employed in manual labours, the pſalms were always in their mouths, and in their heart. Here was no room for any unprofitable converſation: they all made it their buſineſs, abſolutely to forget the world, and all the things of the world; and to live as men, quite dead to all things elſe, but the *one thing neceſſary*. Their thoughts were continually taken up with heavenly truths; the emptineſs and vanity of all ſuch things as paſs away with time, and the greatneſs of things eternal, were their conſtant meditation. Their greateſt dainties for their corporal ſuſtenance, were bread and water: but their ſouls were

were continually feaſted with the word of God, and prayer.

It was the cuſtom of theſe religious, every year on the firſt ſunday of lent, after aſſiſting at the divine myſteries, and receiving the precious body and blood of our Lord, to go forth into the vaſt wilderneſs beyond the river, there to ſpend the holy time of lent, in perfect ſolitude; eating very ſeldom, and then only a few figs, or dates, which they carried with them, or ſuch herbs, as grew wild in the deſart; frequently ſinging pſalms, and praying without ceaſing. After ſpending, in this manner, the greateſt part of the time of the faſt, they all returned again to the monaſtery, to celebrate the paſſion and reſurrection of our Lord: contriving always to meet there, againſt palm-ſunday. The holy man, Zoſimus, according to the cuſtom of the other monks, when lent came, croſſed the river; deſigning to penetrate as far as he could into the heart of the deſart, in hopes, as he afterwards ſaid, of meeting there with ſome Saint, from whom he might receive inſtruction and edification. He took with him but ſlender proviſions; and never eat but when he was forced to it by neceſſity. Where night found him, there he lay down on the earth, to take a little reſt; and as ſoon as the day-light permitted, he haſtened forward, as if he had been making the beſt of his way, towards ſome perſon of his acquaintance. Only he ſtopt for a while, at certain times of the day, to ſing ſome pſalms ſtanding, and to ſpend ſome time in prayer on his knees.

He had travelled in this manner till about mid-lent; when one day ſtopping a little, at the ſixth hour, and performing his uſual prayers, turned towards the Eaſt, he perceived on his right hand the ſhadow, as it were, of a human body. Upon which being ſurpriſed, he made the ſign of the croſs, imagining, it might be an illuſion of the enemy. But when he had finiſhed his devotions, turning his eyes that way, he plainly ſaw

a perſon walking haſtily towards the Weſt; whoſe naked body was grown quite black, with the heat of the ſun, and whoſe hair was turned as white as wool. Upon this ſight, Zoſimus was overjoyed, hoping, he had now found what he ſought: and therefore he began to run, with all his ſtrength, in order to overtake the perſon, whom he perceived to fly from him: and through his earneſt deſire of coming up to her, he continually gained ground of her; till coming within hearing, he cried out, 'Servant of God, why do you fly from 'a ſinner, and a poor old man? Whoever you are, I 'conjure you, by that God, for whoſe ſake you ſpend 'your days in this frightful deſart, to let me come 'near you. I beg of you to ſtop a little, and not to 'refuſe your bleſſing and prayers, to one who entreats 'you, in the name of that God, who never caſt off any 'man, that deſired to come to him.' Whilſt he was thus calling after her, ſhe arrived at a place, that had been made hollow, by the waters of a torrent; but which was now dried up: and when ſhe had paſſed over to the other ſide; he not being able to follow her: ſhe cried out to him 'Father Zoſimus, I beſeech you 'for God's ſake, excuſe my not turning about to ſpeak 'to you: becauſe I am a woman, and quite naked. 'But if you are willing, to favour a poor ſinner with 'your bleſſing, fling over your mantle, that I may cover 'myſelf with it, and then turn to you, and receive 'your benediction.'

The holy man was ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, to hear her call him by his name: which he was ſenſible ſhe could not know, but by revelation. And therefore he readily complied with her deſire, and threw his mantle over; turning his back upon her, till ſhe had covered herſelf with it. Which when ſhe had done, ſhe aſked him, what had brought him ſo far, to ſee ſuch a wretched ſinner as ſhe was? Or what he could expect to know, or learn from her? He having already a high opinion of her ſanctity, inſtead of other anſwer, pro-

ſtrated

ſtrated himſelf upon the ground; and as the cuſtom of the religious was, when they viſited one another, craved her bleſſing. No, father, ſaid ſhe, falling down upon her face, it is your part to bleſs, and to pray: for you are a prieſt: and having for ſo many years ſerved the altar, are admitted to a greater grace and light of God, and to the ſacred myſteries of Jeſus Chriſt. Zoſimus was ſtill more aſtoniſhed, to hear her ſpeak of his being a prieſt; and therefore venerating the Spirit of God in her, inſiſted the more upon her giving her bleſſing firſt; and would not riſe from the ground, till ſhe had ſo far condeſcended, as to bleſs our Lord with theſe words: 'Bleſſed be the Lord, that worketh the ſalvation 'of ſouls': to which he anſwered, Amen: and ſo they both roſe up. Then ſhe began to enquire concerning the preſent ſtate of Chriſtendom; and whether the church enjoyed peace; and how the faithful behaved in their reſpective ſtations? And Zoſimus anſwered her, that God had doubtleſs heard her prayers, and had granted peace to his church. But, ſaid he, I beſeech you, in his name, not to refuſe a poor unworthy monk, the comfort I aſk for the love of Jeſus Chriſt: which is, that you would at preſent offer up your prayers to him, for all the world, in general, and in particular for me a poor ſinner; that this long and painful journey, through this vaſt wilderneſs, may not prove unprofitable to me. She told him, it belonged rather to his function, to pray both for her, and for all the world: however as obedience was a duty incumbent on her; ſhe would comply with his command.

Then turning towards the Eaſt, with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, ſhe prayed for a long time in ſilence; whilſt Zoſimus ſtood without ſaying a word, with his eyes caſt down to the ground. But finding, that ſhe continued very long in her prayer, he looked up a little, and ſaw that ſhe was raiſed a cubit from the earth; and prayed in that manner ſuſpended in the air:

for the truth of which, he afterwards called God to witneſs. This ſight cauſed in him ſo great a ſurprize and apprehenſion, that he threw himſelf upon the ground, all in a ſweat, crying out *Lord have mercy on me.* His ſurprize was ſucceeded by a thought, that perhaps all this might be an illuſion; and this appearance of a woman might be ſome evil ſpirit, that only pretended to pray. But ſhe turned towards him; and anſwering this his thought, aſſured him, ſhe was no ſpirit, but fleſh and blood; and a poor ſinful woman, made up of dirt and corruption. She added, that ſhe had been baptized, and was a Chriſtian. And then making the ſign of the croſs, upon her fore head, upon her eyes, upon her lips, and upon her ſtomach: ſhe ſaid: 'God 'deliver us, father, from the evil ſpirit, and from all his 'ſnares, and ſuggeſtions: for we know, that he bears 'us an implacable hatred.'

Then Zoſimus entreated her, to tell him, who ſhe was, whence ſhe came, when and why ſhe retired into this deſart? And in a word, all that concerned her life there: and this for the glory of God; and for his inſtruction and edification: not doubting, as he told her, but that God had brought him into that deſart, and enabled him, notwithſtanding his great weakneſs and age, to make ſo long a journey, in ſo ſhort a time, with no other deſign, than that the wonders, of his divine grace in her, might be made manifeſt, to the greater glory of his name. He added, that ſhe needed not to apprehend any vain glory, in the recital of her life; ſince her motive would be no other than the glory of God, and the comfort and inſtruction of a poor ſinner. She anſwered, that in regard to her life, there was indeed no room, for her taking any vanity, in the relating the hiſtory of it: ſince ſhe had been a veſſel of election, not of God, but of the devil. That ſhe was even ready to die, with ſhame and confuſion, to think of declaring all her infamous crimes: and that ſhe apprehended, he would fly from her, as from a ſerpent,

pent, when he began to hear her hiſtory. However ſhe was reſolved to be quite ſincere with him, and to declare the particulars of her infamous life: in hopes that he would never ceaſe to pray for her, that ſhe might find mercy at the laſt day.

And here ſhe began to give him a relation of her life: that ſhe was a native of Egypt, and had run away from her parents, when ſhe was but twelve years old, and gone to Alexandria: where falling into bad company, ſhe quickly loſt her honour, and then abandoned herſelf to all kind of lewdneſs, as a publick proſtitute, for the ſpace of ſeventeen years. That at the end of this time, ſeeing a great many perſons flocking towards the ſeaſhore, in order to be embarked for the Holy land; to celebrate there the feaſt of the exaltation of the croſs, in Jeruſalem; ſhe had impudently thruſt herſelf into their company; and both during the voyage, and after her arrival at Jeruſalem, had made herſelf the devil's inſtrument, in drawing many into a partnerſhip in her abominations. That when the day of the feaſt was come, ſhe attempted to go in, with the reſt of the people, into the church of the holy croſs, but was repulſed by an inviſible power; and though ſhe made ſeveral efforts, and ſaw all others about her, going in with eaſe, and ſtrove for her part, with all her might, to go in along with them, ſhe could never advance, beyond the threſhold; but found herſelf ſtill thruſt back into the porch. 'This happening to me, ſaid ſhe, three 'or four times —— I began to conſider, what might 'be the reaſon that I was thus debarred the ſight of 'that life giving wood, of the holy croſs. When a 'ſaving thought ſtriking my mind, and opening 'the eyes of my ſoul, I concluded that it was the 'filthineſs of my life that ſhut me out of the temple 'of God. Then all in tears, and in the utmoſt 'conſternation of mind, I knocked my breaſt; I 'ſighed, ready to break my heart; I cried, I la-

'mented and mourned: till at laſt perceiving over
'my head, in the place where I ſtood, the image
'of the holy mother of God, I immediately ad-
'dreſſed myſelf to her; and with my eyes fixed
'on her picture, I ſaid.' "O Virgin lady, who
"haſt brought forth God according to the fleſh,
"I know I am not worthy to venerate, or even
"to look up at thy image, with theſe eyes of mine,
"that have been defiled with ſo much uncleanneſs: ſeeing thou art a moſt pure unſpotted virgin
"both in body and ſoul; and it is very juſt that
"thy incomparable purity ſhould abominate, and
"drive away from thee ſo filthy a creature as I am.
"Nevertheleſs having been taught, that the God,
"whom thou waſt worthy to bring forth, was made
"man, in order to call ſinners to penance: I be-
"ſeech thee to aſſiſt me, who am here left alone and
"deſtitute of all help. O receive the confeſſion I
"here make of my ſins; and give me leave to enter into the church, that I may not be ſo unhappy, as to be deprived of the ſight of that precious wood, to which that God man was faſtened,
"who was born of thee (without any prejudice to
"thy virginity) and on which he ſpilt his blood for
"my redemption. Ordain, O bleſſed lady, that
"the door may be open to me, tho' moſt unworthy,
"that I may ſalute that divine croſs: and be thou
"pleaſed to be my ſurety to Chriſt thy Son, that I
"ſhall never more defile myſelf with any of thoſe
"deteſtable uncleanneſſes: and for my part, as ſoon
"as I ſhall have ſeen, O holy Virgin, the tree
"on which thy Son vouchſafed to die, I promiſe
"abſolutely to renounce the world, and all its wicked
"ways; and to go away forthwith to the place, to
"which thou, my ſurety, and my guide, ſhalt be
"pleaſed to conduct me. So far her prayer to the
"bleſſed Virgin.'

Then

Then proceeding in her relation, ſhe declared how after having made this prayer and promiſe, ſhe attempted again to go into the church; and found now no manner of obſtacle; but with all eaſe, not only entered in, but alſo penetrated, notwithſtanding the great crowd, as far as the ſanctuary; and there was ſo happy as to ſee and venerate the precious, and life-giving wood, conſecrated with the blood of our redeemer; and to be ſenſibly affected with the experience ſhe now had of the inconceivable exceſs of God's mercy, in his readineſs to receive penitent ſinners. Full of theſe ſentiments ſhe proſtrated herſelf upon the ground, and kiſſed the ſacred pavement of the ſanctuary: and then ran out to the place, where ſhe had made her ſolemn promiſe to the bleſſed Virgin: and there kneeling down before her image, after giving thanks for that goodneſs and charity; ſhe had already experienced, ſhe offered herſelf to make good what ſhe had promiſed; and begged of our bleſſed lady to direct her now to the place, to which ſhe would have her to go, to do penance, for her ſins. Upon this ſhe heard a voice, as of one crying out at a diſtance: *If thou go beyond the Jordan, there thou ſhalt find a holy reſt.* Which words ſhe took as ſpoken to herſelf; and begging of our bleſſed lady not to forſake her, ſhe got up in haſte to follow this call. As ſhe was going, ſhe met with an unknown perſon, who gave her three pieces of money, with which ſhe bought three loaves: and then having inquired of the baker the way that led to the river Jordan; ſhe ſet out immediately upon the road, and did not ſtop till ſhe arrived at the church of St. John the Baptiſt, upon the bank of the river. In this church ſhe performed her devotions, and received the bleſſed ſacrament: eating during her ſhort ſtay there the half of one of her loaves, drinking of the water of the river, and uſing no other bed but the bare ground. On the morning

after her communion, ſhe paſſed over to the other ſide of the river: 'and then, ſaid ſhe, I again 'prayed to my guide (the bleſſed Virgin) to conduct 'me to what ever place ſhe pleaſed. And ſo I 'came into this deſart: and from that time till this 'day (which I compute to be ſeven and forty years) 'I have according to the pſalmiſt *kept my ſelf far 'off, flying away* from all company, *and have abode 'in ſolitude* Pſ. 54.) looking for the mercy of my 'God, who ſaves both little and great, who are con-'verted to him'

Zoſimus then enquired of her, what ſhe had lived upon all that time? She anſwered that the two loaves and a half, which ſhe had brought with her, were for a long time her only food; though they ſoon grew as hard as ſtones, ſo that ſhe could eat but very little of them at a time: and that after they were conſumed, ſhe lived upon what few herbs ſhe could find in the deſart. That as for cloaths, thoſe which ſhe had brought over with her being quite worn out, ſhe had been without any for the greateſt part of the time, and had laboured under inexpreſſible difficulties, for the want of them: being broiled with exceſſive heats in the ſummer; and ſuffering the extremity of cold in the winter: but that under all theſe hardſhips and neceſſities, together with a multitude and variety of temptations, which ſhe had to ſtruggle with; ſhe ever had experienced, to that very day, the power and goodneſs of God, in the many ways, that he had ſtill preſerved her poor ſoul and body. So that when ſhe called to mind, from how many evils the Lord had delivered her, ſhe was nouriſhed and ſupported with a never failing food; and found a banquet, which ſatisfied all her appetite, in the hopes ſhe entertained of her eternal ſalvation.

Zoſimus deſiring alſo to learn from her, more particulars, with relation to the conflicts, ſhe muſt have

have ſuſtained; more eſpecially upon her firſt entring on this new kind of life. She acknowledged that for the firſt ſeventeen years, ſhe was in a manner under perpetual temptations. That ſhe ſuffered much from hunger and thirſt; and was frequently attacked with vehement deſires of the fleſh-pots of Egypt: that ſhe longed for wine, which ſhe had formerly loved, and drunk to exceſs; whereas now ſhe could not even come at water: that the laſcivious ſongs, ſhe had formerly been accuſtomed to ſing, were often coming into her mind; and other impure ſuggeſtions diſturbing her ſoul: and violently moving her to luſt, but that upon perceiving any of theſe aſſaults, ſhe uſed to ſtrike her breaſt, ſhedding many tears; and remembring the ſolemn engagement ſhe had made, before ſhe came into the wilderneſs; placed herſelf in ſpirit before the image of the bleſſed Virgin, whom ſhe had deſired to be her ſurety; and ceaſed not to lament, and to weep, and to beg of her protectreſs, to drive away from her thoſe wicked thoughts, which troubled her poor ſoul, till after long and earneſt prayer, accompanied with floods of tears, and with the bruiſing of her body with her blows; ſhe uſed to perceive a light ſhinning round about her; and a calm was reſtored to her ſoul. And thus, ſaid ſhe, 'I had always the eyes of my heart lifted up without ceaſing to her, that was my ſurety, beſeeching 'her to ſtand by me in my ſolitude and penance: 'and I always experienced the help and aſſiſtance of 'her, who brought forth the author of all purity: 'and ſo I paſſed ſafely through the many conflicts and 'dangers of thoſe ſeventeen years. And from that 'time till now the bleſſed mother of God has never 'forſaken me; but always, and in all things, has 'aſſiſted, and directed me.

Zoſimus hearkened with great attention to all that ſhe ſaid; and taking notice that ſhe had, in her relation of her life, made uſe of paſſages, taken out of the

the pſalms, and other parts of the ſcripture; he aſked her, if ſhe had ever learnt the pſalms, or read any part of the holy ſcripture? She told him, ſhe could not read at all; nor had ſo much as ever heard any perſon read or ſing the pſalms; or ever ſeen either man or beaſt, from her coming into the deſart till that day. 'But, ſaid ſhe, the Word of God, which is living 'and effectual, interiourly teaches the underſtanding 'of man. And now as you have heard all that 'relates to me; I conjure you by the incarnation of 'the Eternal Word, to pray for me, who as you ſee, 'have been ſo vile a ſinner.'

Zoſimus having heard all this, caſt himſelf on his knees, and with a loud voice magnified our Lord, for the wonders of his goodneſs and mercy, to them that fear him, and ſeek him. And ſhe on her part, begged of him, for our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, that he would not ſpeak of the things ſhe had related to him to any one living, till God ſhould deliver her out of the priſon of the body: and, ſaid ſhe, 'about this time twelve month, by God's grace, 'you ſhall ſee me again. I beg of you therefore for 'our Lord's ſake, that when the holy time of lent 'ſhall return, next year, you would not come over 'the Jordan, according to the cuſtom of your mo'naſtery; but ſtay at home during that time: and 'indeed you ſhall not be able to go out, if you would: 'and that in the moſt ſacred evening of our Lord's laſt 'ſupper, you would bring out for me, in a holy veſ'ſel, worthy of ſo great a myſtery, the divine body 'and life-giving blood of our Saviour: and wait for 'me, on that ſide of the river, which you inhabit: 'and I ſhall come, and receive thoſe precious gifts, 'that are the life of the ſoul—at the very hour, in 'which our Lord imparted that divine ſupper to his 'diſciples.' Having ſaid this, and once more begged the holy father to pray for her, ſhe haſtened away into the remoter parts of the wilderneſs. And Zoſimus,

mus, after caſting himſelf down upon the ground, and kiſſing the earth upon which ſhe had ſtood, returned through the deſart, the ſame way he came, and arrived in due time at the monaſtery.

During the following year, he kept to himſelf all he had ſeen and heard; longing for the return of lent, that he might be once more bleſſed with the ſight and converſation of one, whom he juſtly held in the higheſt veneration. When the holy faſt of lent was come, he was viſited with a fever, which, as the Saint had foretold, diſabled him from going abroad into the deſart with the reſt of the brethren; but was of no further conſequence. Wherefore on Maundy-Thurſday in the evening, in compliance with what ſhe had deſired of him, he carried out, in a ſmall chalice, the ſacred body and precious blood of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to the bank of the river, and there waited for her coming, looking attentively towards the deſart, in expectation of what he had ſo great a deſire of ſeeing: but not without an apprehenſion, as ſhe was ſomewhat long before ſhe came, leſt ſhe might have been there already, and not finding him, might have gone back again. Another thought alſo occured to his mind, and gave him pain: which was, in caſe of her coming, how ſhe ſhould paſs over the river to him; for there was neither bridge nor boat in that place. Whilſt the holy old man was in this perplexity of thought, he diſcovered the Saint on the oppoſite bank of the Jordan, by the light of the moon, which was then at the full; and ſaw her making the ſign of the croſs upon the river, and preſently after walking upon the water, as if it had been firm ground, and coming towards him. With which ſight he was ſo much aſtoniſhed, that he was going to caſt himſelf upon his knees; had ſhe not ſtopped him, by crying out. 'Father, what are you doing? Remember

'you

'you are a prieſt of God, and carry with you the 'divine myſteries.

Being now come over the river, ſhe craved his bleſſing; and after deſiring him to recite the creed and the Lord's prayer, ſhe received at his hands the bleſſed ſacrament. After which lifting up her hands to heaven, ſighing and weeping, ſhe cried out: 'Now 'doſt thou diſmiſs thy ſervant, O Lord, according 'to thy word in peace: becauſe my eyes have ſeen 'thy ſalvation.' Then turning to the old man, ſhe deſired him to pardon the trouble ſhe had given him; and for the preſent to return to the monaſtery: but in the following lent, not to fail to come to the place, where ſhe had firſt ſpoken to him; and that there he ſhould ſee her again, in the manner, God ſhould be pleaſed to ordain. Zoſimus deſired her to eat ſomething; having brought with him for that purpoſe in a baſket ſome figs and dates, with ſome lentiles ſteeped in water. She took a few grains of the lentiles, ſaying, ſhe had no occaſion for any more; and that the grace of the Spirit was ſufficient to preſerve the ſoul in its purity. Then begging of him again for God's ſake to pray for her, and never to forget her miſeries; whilſt he on his part recommended himſelf, and the whole church to her prayers; ſhe took her leave of him, and making the ſign of the croſs upon the river, croſſed it again, in the ſame manner as ſhe came, walking upon the waters.

The next year, Zoſimus going out in lent, according to the cuſtom of the monaſtery, into the deſart, made the beſt of his way towards the place where he had firſt ſeen the Saint, in hopes of being ſtill more and more edified, by her ſight, and heavenly converſation; and of learning alſo her name; which he regretted his not having inquired after, when he ſaw her laſt. When after a long and painful journey, he arrived at the dry torrent, he found in the higher part of that concavity, the dead body of the Saint, extended

extended decently on the ground, with the hands croſſed, and the face turned towards the eaſt. He fell down at the feet of the holy corpſe, and waſhed them with his tears: and then began to ſing the pſalms, and recite the prayers, for the burial of the dead. When behold he perceived on the ground theſe words written in the ſand: 'Father Zoſimus; 'bury the body of poor Mary: render to the earth 'what belongs to the earth: and in the name of 'God pray for me, on the ninth day of April, the 'day of the paſſion of our Lord, after the communi-'on of the divine ſupper.' The old man reading theſe words could not conceive who ſhould write them: ſeeing the Saint had aſſured him ſhe could neither read nor write. However he was pleaſed to have found out her name: but aſtoniſhed to think how quickly ſhe had been brought back, after receiving the holy communion, in one night, as much ſpace of ground, as had taken him up twenty days, travelling without ceaſing: and that immediately after her return, her ſoul had left her body, and taken its flight to heaven.

But now his ſolicitude was, how he ſhould execute what was deſired of him, and bury her body; for he had no proper inſtrument to open the earth, or make a grave. But he was not long under this perplexity, before he perceived a huge lion ſtanding by the body of the Saint, and licking her feet. He was terrified at firſt with the ſight; but making the ſign of the croſs, he recovered himſelf; truſting that the holy body would protect him from all dangers. Beſides he found the lion began to fawn upon him, as if he proffered him his ſervice. So that being convinced, God had ſent the beaſt, to make a grave for his ſervant, he commanded him in God's name to ſet about that work, with his claws. The lion obeyed, and preſently made a ſufficient grave; in which Zoſimus enterred the Saint's body, covered only

only with the mantle, ſhe had received of him: and with many tears, he recommended both himſelf and the whole world to her prayers: and then departed, praiſing God: whilſt the lion, like a tame lamb, went his way alſo into the remoter parts of the deſart. Zoſimus at his returning home, related to his brethren the whole hiſtory of the life of the Saint from the beginning, to the great edification of them all; concealing no part of what he had ſeen and heard. After which he ſtill continued ſerving and glorifying God in that monaſtery, till he was a hundred years old: and this with ſuch perfection, as to be enrolled after his death amongſt the Saints. His name occurs in the Roman martyrology, on the fourth of April; and that of St. Mary of Egypt, on the ſecond of the ſame month.

A col-

A collection of remarkable ſayings, actions and examples of the eaſtern ſolitaries: extracted out of ancient eccleſiaſtical writers.

Out of the third book of the lives of the fathers, by Rufinus.

I.

AN ancient father ſaid to his diſciples: we muſt hate the repoſe of this preſent life, the pleaſures of the body, and the gratifying its appetites; and muſt not ſeek at all the honour that is from man: and then the Lord Jeſus will give us the honour and glory of heaven, the repoſe of eternal life, and never ending joys, with his Angels.

II.

An ancient father lived many years an anchoret in the heart of the wilderneſs, in the practice of extraordinary abſtinences and continual labours: ſome brethren coming to him one day, and admiring his patience and perſeverance; aſked him how he was able to endure, ſo many and ſuch great ſufferings, as he was obliged to go through, in that dry and frightful ſolitude? O brethren, ſaid he, all the labours and ſufferings of all the years I have been here, are not comparable to one hour of ſuffering in hell's flames. Wherefore, in order to eſcape theſe, we muſt be willing to undergo the hardſhips and labours of this ſhort time of our mortal life; and to mortify ourſelves here, that we may find a never ending reſt hereafter, in the happy eternity of the world to come.

III.

A certain religious hermite, lived a recluſe and penitential life, near the ſuburbs of Conſtantinople,

ple, where he had a little cell, from which he never ſtirred out. Theodoſius the emperor, having heard of this ſervant of God, deſiring to ſee him, went to his cell one day all alone, and knockt at the door. The hermit let him in, and according to the cuſtom of the religious in their viſits, they firſt made their prayer together, and then ſat down. The emperor enquired of him, concerning the way of living of the holy fathers in Egypt, and their employments. They all pray, ſaid the hermit, for your ſalvation. Theodoſius looked about to ſee what he had in his cell: and diſcovering nothing but ſome dry bread in a baſket, he ſaid: father, give me your benediction, and let us refreſh ourſelves together. The hermit put ſome ſalt into water, and then ſoaked the dry bread in it, of which they made their meal together: and when they had done, he preſented the emperor with a cup of water. Theodoſius ſaid to him: Do you know who I am? God knows who you are, ſaid the hermit. 'I am Theodoſius the emperor, ſaid 'he, and I came hither to be edified by you. O 'how happy are you ſolitaries, who being altogether 'free, and diſengaged from the cares and occupa- 'tions of the world, enjoy a calm and quiet life; 'having no other ſolicitude, but for the ſalvation of 'your ſouls; and no other thoughts, but how you 'may make yourſelves worthy of the heavenly re- 'wards of that life, and kingdom to come, that 'knows no end. But I, though born to the purple, 'and ſeated on the imperial throne, declare to you 'in truth, that I never ſit down to my meals, with- 'out having ſome cares upon my mind.' Having ſaid this, and teſtified a great deal of honour and eſteem for the ſervant of God, he went his way. But the hermit immediately began to think with himſelf, that in conſequence of this viſit from the emperor, a great number of others of all conditions, and even of the courtiers and ſenators, would be coming

coming to interrupt his devotions; and apprehending withal, leſt he ſhould come to take a complacency in their viſits, and in the honours they would ſhew him; and ſo fall, by degrees, into the nets of ſatan, by pride and vain-glory; in order to ſecure himſelf from the danger, he departed that very night, and made the beſt of his way into Egypt; where he aſſociated himſelf with the holy fathers of the Egyptian deſarts.

IV.

Amongſt the other holy inhabitants of the deſarts of Egypt, there was an ancient anchoret named Agatho; who was much admired for his extraordinary patience and humility. Some of the brethren, who had a mind to make a trial of him, went one day to his cell; and complained to him of the ſcandal he gave by his pride, and ſelf-conceit; and by his deſpiſing of others, and ſetting them at naught; and taking the liberty to cenſure and detract them; and this, ſaid they, becauſe being vicious yourſelf, and given to lewdneſs, you think to cloake your own vices by charging them upon others. The holy man heard all they ſaid, without ſhewing the leaſt emotion, or diſturbance of ſoul; or denying any part of the charge: on the contrary, caſting himſelf at their feet, he confeſſed himſelf to be indeed a very grievous ſinner; and begged of them, they would be ſo charitable, as to interceed to our Lord, for ſuch a poor miſerable wretch, loaded with ſo many crimes; to the end he might obtain mercy, and forgiveneſs of his great and manifold ſins, by the aſſiſtance of their prayers. But, ſaid they, we muſt tell you moreover, that ſome people ſay, you are alſo a heretick. O no, ſaid the Saint, however wretched I am, in other regards, and however guilty of innumerable other ſins, I am not ſo miſerable as to give up my ſhare in Jeſus Chriſt, by hereſy. Far

be this from my ſoul! Then all theſe brethren caſting themſelves at his feet, deſired to know of him; why he, who had ſuffered without the leaſt emotion or reſiſtance, ſo many other falſe accuſations, had ſhewed ſo much horrour, and ſo great a repugnance to his being accuſed of hereſy? He anſwered, that as to the other accuſations, it was the part of humility, to love to be deſpiſed; and to be willing to paſs for a grievous ſinner: to bear alſo with reproaches, and calumnies, by the example of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who ſuffered in ſilence ſuch treatment as this from the Jews, for our inſtruction. But that there was a particular enormity, and malignity in hereſy (which is an obſtinate oppoſition to the revealed truths of God) by means of which, it ſeparates the ſoul, in ſuch manner, from Jeſus Chriſt, as to deſtroy the very foundation of ſalvation, which is faith; and gives her up to the devil, as it were, without reſerve. And therefore, as no one ought to be willing to paſs for an obſtinate enemy of Jeſus Chriſt, or of any of his revealed truths, no one ought to be willing to paſs for a heretick.

V.

There was, in a certain monaſtery of Egypt, a monk named Eulalius, endowed in an extraordinary degree with the grace of humility. Now as in that numerous community, there were not wanting divers lukewarm brethren, who were guilty of frequent faults, and negligences; particularly in breaking, or deſtroying the earthen veſſels, or other utenſils of the monaſtery; they were accuſtomed to lay all theſe faults upon Eulalius, whom they found ever ready to bare the blame of them. The ſuperiors often took him to taſk on theſe occaſions: and he inſtead of pleading *not guilty*, proſtrated himſelf before them, and begged pardon for his faults and negligences. The rule of the monaſtery enjoined penances for theſe faults,

faults, which he chearfully underwent, even to the paſſing often two or three days together, without eating. But as freſh accuſations ſtill were brought againſt him, the ancient religious (who knew not that he endured all this for Chriſt's ſake, for an exercice of his patience and humility) repreſented to the abbot, that as they found no amendment, it would be neceſſary to think of taking ſome other courſe with this Eulalius: for that by his negligences, moſt of the utenſils of the houſe were already deſtroyed; and that there would be no keeping any thing whole in the monaſtery as long as he was there. The abbot deſired ſome time to conſider on't: and in the mean while begging light from God, he learnt of him in prayer the merit of Eulalius, and his great patience and humility: which his divine Majeſty was alſo pleaſed, not long after, to declare by a miracle, in the preſence of all the religious. Upon this the brethren began to eſteem him as a Saint; and to honour and praiſe him as ſuch, on all occaſions: which was a ſenſible mortification to this humble ſervant of God: inſomuch that he heavily complained of his misfortune, in having now loſt, as he ſaid, the treaſure of humility, which by the grace of Chriſt, he had for ſo long a time been labouring to acquire. At length, to fly from all this honour and eſteem, he withdrew himſelf privately by night from the monaſtery into a deſart, where he might be unknown to all men; and there choſe a loneſome cave for his habitation: in which he ſpent the remainder of the days of his mortality; in order to ſecure his humility from the dangers, it is uſually expoſed to, in the midſt of applauſe and eſteem.

VI.

A certain ſolitary came one day to the monaſtery of abbot Silvanus, on mount Sina; and finding the brethren all at work, ſaid to them, *Why are you*

labouring for the meat that periſheth: did not *Mary chooſe the better part?* The abbot turning to his diſciple Zacharias, bid him give that brother a book, and conduct him to an empty cell. When the hour came, at which the monks uſed to take their meal (which was about three in the afternoon) the ſtranger was looking out, expecting that the abbot would ſend for him to the refectory: but finding that the hour was paſſed, and no one came to call him: he went and aſked the abbot, if the monks did not dine that day? He told him, yes, they had dined: but that as for his part, they had not ſent for him; becauſe they underſtood he was a *ſpiritual* man, and had no need of *the meat that periſheth*: whereas they being carnal, and having need of it, were under a neceſſity of labouring for it. But you, ſaid he, have *choſen with Mary the better part*, by reading all the day long, without requiring this carnal food. The brother begged pardon, and acknowledged his error: upon which the abbot deſired him to remember, that as Martha wanted the aſſiſtance of Mary, ſo Mary could not do alone, without the help of Martha.

VII.

Abbot Moſes ſaid, that as when a general beſieges a city of the enemies, he endeavours to hinder any proviſions being brought to the beſieged; to the end that through hunger and want, they may be obliged to deliver up their city: ſo the man that deſires to overcome his carnal paſſions, muſt ſtarve them out, by faſting and abſtinence.

VIII.

A certain religious man having received an injury from another, came to complain of it to one of the ancient fathers. The old man bid him, on this and the like occaſions, to think with himſelf, that the injury, or affront, was not levelled at him, but at his ſins,

ſins: and adviſed him to ſit down contented, and to ſay, *all this is for my ſins.*

IX.

Another good brother, when any perſons affronted him, ſcoffed at him, or injured him; uſed to rejoice, and to ſay; theſe are my friends, who are giving me an opportunity of advancing in virtue: whereas they that extol and applaud us, are rather our enemies; according to that of Iſaiah iii. 12. *O my people, they that call thee bleſſed, the ſame deceive thee, and deſtroy the way of thy ſteps.*

X.

A brother aſked an ancient father, to give him one ſhort preſcription, which if he obſerved, he might be ſaved. The father told him, the beſt preſcription he could give for the ſecurity of his ſoul, was to overcome himſelf ſo far as to bear, with meekneſs and ſilence, the greateſt injuries and reproaches.

XI.

St. Macarius ſaid: He that overcomes himſelf in all things, it is he that is a monk indeed. For if a perſon, whilſt he corrects or rebukes another for his faults, ſuffers himſelf to be moved to anger, he is only gratifying his own paſſion. No one ought to loſe his own ſoul, whilſt he pretends to ſave another.

XII.

The abbot Silvanus, being aſked by certain brethren, to ſpeak ſomething for their edification, deſired his diſciple Zacharias to give them a leſſon. The diſciple taking off his outward habit, laid it upon the ground, and ſtampt with his feet upon it, ſaying: No one can be truly a religious man, that is not willing to be troden under foot in this manner.

XIII.

Some of the brethren extolled, in the hearing of St. Antony, the virtues of one of the monks: but the Saint having taken a trial of him, found that he could not bear an injury. Upon which the man of God told him, that he was like a building, which had a beautiful front before, but lay open behind to thieves and robbers.

XIV.

One of the fathers ſaid: all the labour of a monk, without humility, is vain. For humility is the fore runner of charity; as John the Baptiſt was the forerunner of Chriſt, drawing all to him: for in like manner humility draws men to charity; that is, to God himſelf: *for God is charity*, 1. John iv.

XV.

St. Antony ſaw one day, in a viſion, the whole earth as a large field, covered on every ſide with the nets and ſnares of the enemy. Upon which ſighing, he cried out, who ſhall be able to paſs, or eſcape all theſe? Immediately he heard an anſwer. *Humility alone can paſs ſecure.*

XVI.

A monk in a certain monaſtery having committed a fault, for which he was ſeverely rebuked by the reſt of the brethren, went away to the cell of St. Antony. The brethren followed him thither, in order to bring him back; and warmly upbraided him with his faults, in the preſence of the Saint; which he on his part as warmly denied. There happened to be there at that time the holy abbot Paphnucius, ſurnamed Cephala, who to put a ſtop to the contention, ſaid by way of a parable: 'I was 'ſtanding one day on the bank of the river; and I 'ſaw there a man, that was ſunk into the mire up to

'to the knees: and behold there came ſome other 'men, ſtretching out their hands, as it were, to help 'him out; but inſtead of drawing him out, they 'puſhed him further in, even up to the neck. St. 'Antony hearing the parable, and approving the 'thought, ſaid of St. Paphnucius: Behold a man, 'who has the right notion of the way of reclaiming 'the faulty, and of ſaving their ſouls.' The brethren preſently took the hint; and begging pardon for their heat, received the brother, in the tender bowels of the mercy of Jeſus Chriſt.

XVII.

St. Pemen (alias Paſtor) gave this as a rule to his diſciples: 'Never do your own will: but rather 'humble yourſelves, to do the will of your neigh-'bours.

XVIII.

A certain anchoret dwelt in a cave, not far from a religious community, in great abſtinence, and ſanctity of life. One day ſome of the monks, coming to viſit him, obliged him to eat before his time: and when they had done ſo, they aſked him, if it was no pain or trouble to him, to be put thus out of his way, by eating contrary to his cuſtom? He anſwered, that never any thing gave him pain or trouble, but the following his own will.

XIX.

The holy abbot Agatho, coming one day into the next city, to ſell his work, found there a certain ſtranger, lying in a by corner very ſick; who had no man at all to take any care of him. The ſervant of God, ſeeing this object of charity, inſtead of returning back to the wilderneſs, hired himſelf a lodging in the city, to which he carried the ſickman; and there attended on him, for the ſpace of four months; working in the

mean time with his own hands, for the procuring him all neceſſaries: after which, the ſick man being now perfectly recovered, the Saint returned home again to his cell.

XX.

An ancient ſervant of God, ſeeing his diſciple ſick, bid him be of good comfort, and to return thanks to God for this viſitation. 'For, ſaid he, if thou 'art but iron, the *fire* will ſerve to take the ruſt away 'from thee; and if thou art gold, it will refine thee, 'and purify thee.' Don't be uneaſy then, my dear brother; for ſince it hath pleaſed God to ſend thee this ſickneſs, who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt grieve or repine at his doings? O rather ſuffer all, with patience and reſignation: and let thy only prayer be, that God would do his will in thee.

XXI.

An ancient religious, who was frequently viſited with ſickneſſes, happened to paſs one whole year without any illneſs. Upon which occaſion he wept, and grieved very much: ſaying to our Lord in prayer; Lord, thou haſt forſaken me; for thou haſt not once viſited me all this year. This holy man had a right notion of the ineſtimable value of patient ſufferings.

XXII.

When the holy abbot Agatho was drawing near to his end, he lay for three days with his eyes fixed, in ſilence. Some of the brethren, touching him, ſaid: Father, where are you now? He anſwered, I am ſtanding before the judgment ſeat of God. Why, ſaid they, are you alſo afraid? According to my power, ſaid he, I have always endeavoured to keep the commandments of my God: but I am a poor frail mortal, and how do I know, whether my works are pleaſing to God or no? And do you not truſt, ſaid

ſaid they, that your works are according to God? I dare not truſt to my works, ſaid he, in the ſight of God: for the judgment of God is very different from the judgment of men.

XXIII.

A certain brother aſked one of the fathers, how the ſoul might attain to humility? He anſwered, if ſhe think only of her own evils, and not of thoſe of others.

XXIV.

The abbot Pemen ſaid, that nothing gave ſo much pleaſure to the enemy, as when a perſon will not diſcover his temptations to his ſuperior or director.

XXV.

A certain father ſaid, that as the flies don't come near a pot, which is boiling hot; but ſit upon ſuch things as are only lukewarm, and leave their maggots there. So the devils are kept at a diſtance, by ſuch religious, as are quite fervent in the love and ſervice of God; but have a great power over ſuch as are but lukewarm, to delude them, and to corrupt them with ſin.

XXVI.

An ancient father gave the following leſſon to his diſciple: 'Every day, ſaid he, think that the hour 'of thy death is at hand: and, as if thou wert already 'ſhut up in thy tomb, have no care at all for this 'world. Let the fear of God continually abide 'with thee at every hour. Believe thyſelf to be in-'ferior to every one. Speak no evil of any one 'living, becauſe God knows all things: and be at 'peace with all men: and the Lord ſhall give 'thee reſt at all times.

XXVII.

XXVII.

Abbot John uſed to ſay, that a religious man ought to be like one ſitting under a tree, who perceiving any wild beaſt, or ſerpent coming towards him, climbs up the tree, that he may be out of their reach: for juſt ſo a religious man, ſitting in his cell, and perceiving any evil thoughts coming upon him, in order to ſecure himſelf againſt the danger, ought to aſcend up to God by the tree of prayer.

XXVIII.

Some of the brethren came one day to viſit the holy abbot Lucius: who enquired of them, what kind of work they followed? They told him, they did not work; but that according to the Apoſtle, they *prayed without ceaſing*. But do you not eat, ſaid the father? and do you not ſleep? And who prays for you then? To which they made no reply. Now, ſaid he, I will tell you the manner, in which I endeavour to *pray without ceaſing*, and yet never fail to work with my hands. For all the time I am making baſkets, or cords, or the like, I am ſaying to my God: *Have mercy on me O God according to thy great mercy: and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my iniquity.* And when I have finiſhed my work, I find means, out of the price of it, to give ſome part to the poor ſervants of Chriſt; to engage them thereby to pray for the forgiveneſs of my ſins, even whilſt I am eating, or ſleeping. And thus they, by praying for me, help to make my prayer continual, and without ceaſing.

XXIX.

A certain young man, deſirous to embrace a monaſtick life, was kept from it for ſome time by his mother. But as he ſtill continued, begging her to let him go, and often repeating that he was reſolved

ſolved to ſave his ſoul. At length ſhe conſented to his entering into a monaſtery. Being admitted to the habit of religion, he was a ſtranger to the ſpirit of religion, and led for many years a very tepid and negligent life. His mother in the mean time died: and he ſoon after falling grievouſly ſick, lay for a while in a trance, as if he had been dead. In this trance, he ſeemed to himſelf to be carried to judgment, where he met with his mother, amongſt others, who were expecting there the ſentence of condemnation. And how now, ſaid ſhe to him, my ſon, art thou alſo brought hither, to receive with us the ſentence of damnation? And what is become of that fine ſaying of thine, which thou ſo often repeatedſt: that thou waſt reſolved to ſave thy ſoul? The horrour and confuſion that oppreſſed him, upon hearing this reproach from his mother, was inexpreſſible: and in this plight he ſeemed to himſelf to ſtand, as upon the brink of hell; till he heard a voice, ordering that he ſhould be ſent back again, as not being the perſon called for; and that ſuch another, of a neighbouring monaſtery, that was one of the ſame name, ſhould be brought thither. Upon this he came to himſelf, and related to thoſe about him all he had ſeen and heard: and deſired that ſome one of them would preſently go, and enquire in the neighbouring monaſtery, if that other brother was departed this life. They found upon enquiry that he was juſt then dead: which confirmed them in their belief of the truth of what he had related. As to his part, he was no ſooner recovered of his ſickneſs, but he ſhut himſelf up in his cell; and there gave himſelf in ſuch manner to the care of his ſalvation, as to think now of nothing elſe; but only night and day to weep, and do penance for his former negligences and ſins. Some of the brethren adviſed him to be more moderate in his tears, (and other penances) for fear of hurting his health, by the greatneſs of his compunction.

punction. But he went on with his penitential labours to the end; telling them upon theſe occaſions: If I could not bear the reproach, which I heard from my mother; how ſhall I be able to endure the reproaches of Chriſt and his Angels, in the day of judgment?

XXX.

A certain monk, in the deſarts of Egypt, had a ſiſter that followed a very wicked courſe of life in the city, where ſhe drew many into ſin. The other religious perſwaded him, to go, and look after her, in order to reclaim her from her wickedneſs, and to deliver the ſouls of many others, who were enſnared by her beauty. When he came near the place, where ſhe lived; one that knew him, ran and told her, that her brother was come from the deſart to viſit her. Upon hearing this ſhe left her company; and preſently went out with joy to meet him; and offered to ſalute him: but he kept her off; and earneſtly beſought her, to have pity on her ſoul: remonſtrating to her the dreadful ſtate ſhe was in; and the diſmal conſequences ſhe had to apprehend for eternity, if ſhe did not immediately turn to God: and this in ſo feeling and effectual a manner, that ſhe was ſeized all with a trembling: and aſked him, if there could be any hopes of ſalvation for her? And if it was not now too late, to think of her turning to God? He aſſured her it was not; provided ſhe would be quite in earneſt, in her applications to the divine mercy, by true penance. She flung herſelf therefore at his feet, and begged of him, that he would take her along with him into the deſart; where ſhe might do penance for her ſins. Go then, ſaid he, and cover your head (for ſhe had run forth to meet him barehead) and then come along with me. O brother, ſaid ſhe, let us make no delay: 'tis better for me to ſuffer the diſgrace of going barehead, than to enter in any more into that houſe, which has been the

the ſhop of my iniquities. They made therefore the beſt of their way towards the deſart, the brother preaching penance to her all the way they went: till ſeeing ſome of the brethren coming towards them, he deſired her to ſtep aſide, and keep at ſome diſtance, for fear of any one's taking ſcandal from ſeeing a woman in his company; for all men, ſaid he, don't know that you are my ſiſter. She did ſo: and when the brethren were gone by; he went to look after her, and found her lying on the ground dead; with her feet all bloody, for ſhe had walked all the way barefoot. He lamented her death; and went and related to the ancient religious, all that had happened. Theſe ſervants of God were at a loſs, what judgment they ſhould make with regard to her ſoul; dying, as ſhe did, after ſuch a ſinful life, without any time to do penance. But one of them learnt by revelation; that as ſhe had left all ſhe had in the world; and took no care for any thing elſe but the healing the wounds of her ſoul; and had wept and greatly lamented for her ſins; the divine goodneſs had accepted of this her penance, and had ſhewed her mercy.

Out of the fifth book of the lives of the fathers, by an ancient eccleſiaſtical writer, tranſlated from the Greek into Latin, by Pelagius deacon of Rome, who was made pope anno 558.

XXXI.

WHEN the holy abbot John, ſirnamed the dwarf, was near his end; his diſciples entreated him, to leave them by way of a legacy, ſome ſhort wholeſom leſſon, of Chriſtian perfection. He ſighed and ſaid to them: *I never followed my own will: nor did I ever teach any other, what I had not firſt practiſed my ſelf.*

XXXII.

XXXII.

Abbot Siſois being aſked, which was the way to the peace and reſt of the ſoul? replied: 'Be contemptible in your own eyes: caſt your pleaſures behind your back: and be free, from all worldly cares; and you ſhall find reſt.'

XXXIII.

Another holy man preſcribed for this end the following precepts: 'Pray always to God that he may give you compunction and humility: think always on your own ſins; and don't judge others: be ſubject, and obedient to all (yet ſo as to avoid familiarity with women, or boys, or hereticks) have no confidence at all in yourſelves: reſtrain your tongue, and your ſenſual appetite: contend with no man: contradict no man in diſcourſe: and your mind ſhall be at peace.

XXXIV.

A certain brother came to abbot Moſes in the deſart of Scete, to beg of him a word of Inſtruction. Go, ſaid the Saint, and keep thyſelf recollected in thy cell: and thy cell ſhall teach thee all things.

XXXV.

Some brethren, going from Scete to viſit St. Antony, entered into a boat, which was to carry them part of their way up the Nile. In the boat they found an oldman, a ſtranger to them, who was alſo going to St. Antony. They were entertaining one another, all the way, with diſcourſes upon different ſubjects; whilſt the oldman was ſitting in ſilence and recollection. When they came to land, as they found that the old man was going likewiſe to St. Antony, they went along with him. St. Antony told them, they had met with a good companion, in that ſervant of God. And you, ſaid he, father,

father, ſpeaking to the old man, have found good company. 'He anſwered: I believe they are good: 'but they have no door to their dwelling: and 'whoſoever has a mind goes into the ſtable, and 'takes out the beaſt, and rides upon it.' Which he ſaid, becauſe they were not recollected; and had no guard upon their tongue: but uttered whatever came into their mind.

XXXVI.

An ancient religious ſeeing another laugh, ſaid to him: we muſt by and by appear before the great Lord of heaven and earth, to give a ſtrict account of our whole lives; and can you laugh?

XXXVII.

A certain gentleman came one day, to the church of the wilderneſs of Scete, with a bag of money; which he deſired the prieſt, the ſuperior, to diſtribute amongſt the brethren. The prieſt told him, they did not want it. But as the gentleman was very preſſing; and would not be contented, except he would receive it; he put the money into a baſket, and ſet it in the entry of the church; and cried out to the brethren: if any one wants, let him here take what he wants. Now there was not one of them all that would touch it: and ſome of them would not even ſo much as look on it. So the prieſt ſaid to the gentleman: ſir, our Lord has accepted of your offering; go now and give it to the poor: and thus he ſent him away, much edified with their diſintereſtedneſs.

XXXVIII.

One brought a ſum of money to a brother, who was a leper: ſaying, take, and keep this, for your own uſe: becauſe you are old and infirm. The old-man anſwered: would you then deprive me, ſir, of my nurſing

nurſing father, who has fed me theſe threeſcore years? Behold for ſo long a time, notwithſtanding my infirmity, I have never wanted: for God has always provided for me: and therefore I will not diſtruſt him now.

XXXIX.

The brethren deſired one of the ancient fathers, to remit ſomething of his great labours and auſterities. He anſwered them: believe me, my children, I am of opinion, that Abraham himſelf, when he ſaw the greatneſs of the eternal rewards of heaven, was ſorry he had not laboured, more than he did, when he was here upon earth.

XL.

A certain hermite had his cell in the wilderneſs, at the diſtance of twelve miles from any water. One day, as he was going for water, he found himſelf quite tired out, and ſpent with the journey: ſo that he was blaming himſelf, for taking ſo much unneceſſary pains; and thinking he would change his abode, and make himſelf a cell, near the ſpring. Whilſt he had this in mind, he heard one behind him, numbring his ſteps: and turning about, he ſaw an Angel, who told him he was commiſſioned from heaven, to take an account of all thoſe laborious ſteps of his: which ſhould all be rewarded. This viſion encouraged the old man; and made him not only give up his deſign of fixing his habitation near the water; but alſo determined him to remove his cell to a ſtill greater diſtance; ſince the divine goodneſs was pleaſed in this manner to count, and to reward all his ſteps.

XLI.

There was an ancient hermite in Thebais, who lived in a cave; and had with him a virtuous young man, his diſciple. Now it it was his cuſtom every evening,

to

to make an exhortation to the young man, for his inſtruction, direction, and advancement in virtue and piety: after which they ſpent ſome time together in prayer; and then the old man gave him his bleſſing, and ſent him to bed. One day the ſervant of God had entertained ſome viſiters with diſcourſes of piety, till late in the day: ſo that after their departure, whilſt he was making his exhortation, as uſual, to his diſciple, he fell faſt aſleep. The brother ſtaid in the place, looking for the father's awaking, that they might make their prayer, according to cuſtom, before he went to bed. But the old man ſlept on ſo ſound, that he did not awake till after midnight. In the mean time the young man, finding he ſlept ſo long, and being wearied and ſleepy himſelf, was ſtrongly tempted to leave him, and to go to bed: but he reſiſted the temptation, and continued to ſtay with him. A little after, the temptation returned again, and was very troubleſome to him: but he got the better of it again, and drove it away: and thus was he violently aſſaulted ſeven different times; but ſtill overcame the temptation; and forced himſelf to ſtay, till his maſter awaked. After midnight the old father awaking, and finding the young diſciple with him, aſked him: why he was not gone to bed? Becauſe, ſaid he, you had not diſcharged me. Why then, ſaid the father, did you not waken me? I did not preſume, ſaid he, to diſturb you. Wherefore riſing up, they began their matins, or midnight office together, it being now the time; and when they had finiſhed, the old father ſent his diſciple to take his reſt. After he was gone, the old man ſitting by himſelf, fell into a trance or extaſy: when an unknown perſon ſhewed him a glorious place, in which there was a throne, and over the throne ſeven crowns; and told him, that place and throne was deſtined by our Lord for his diſciple, as a reward of his virtue and piety: and

that as for thoſe ſeven crowns, he had purchaſed them that very night. In the morning, the father aſked his diſciple, what he had done that night? Who anſwered, that he had done nothing particular. But he inſiſted ſtill upon his telling him, all that had paſſed, that night, even to his very thoughts; till he aſſured him, he knew of nothing at all, except it was that he had been ſeven times ſtrongly tempted to leave him, whilſt he continued ſleeping, and to go away to bed; but as he had not been diſcharged by him, according to cuſtom, he had forced himſelf to ſtay. And thus the old man came to underſtand, that every victory over oneſelf, purchaſes a crown from God: and how much it imports to overcome ourſelves, even in ſmall matters.

XLII.

St. Antony was told one day of a young religious man, who was already ſo far favoured with miraculous gifts, that the very wild beaſts of the deſart obeyed him. The Saint, apprehending ſome oſtentation and pride, in the manner of his proceeding: ſaid on this occaſion: that monk ſeems to me to reſemble a ſhip richly laden, which is in danger of being ſhipwrecked, before it reaches the haven. Not long after, the Saint being in company with ſome of his diſciples, began all on a ſudden to weep and lament: and being aſked the reaſon of his mourning, he cried out: Oh! a great pillar of the church is juſt now fallen: go ye and look after ſuch a one, naming the young religious man. They went, and found him in a moſt melancholly way, for having juſt then committed a mortal ſin: but he begged, they would deſire their holy father, to obtain for him, by his prayers, a reprieve of ten days; that in that time, he might make ſatisfaction for his crime. But this was not granted him: for within five days, he was called away out of this life.

XLIII.

XLIII.

A certain brother came to viſit the holy abbot Serapion: who begged of him, as it was uſual amongſt the ancient religious, in their viſits, to give out the prayer, which was to be made, when they firſt met; but he refuſed it, ſaying he was a poor ſinner, and unworthy to wear the religious habit. In like manner, when the Saint would have waſhed his feet, according to the cuſtom, he would not ſuffer him: but ſtill alledged his own great unworthineſs. The holy man entertained him at table with what his cell could afford: and at the ſame time gave him ſome charitable advice, ſaying: 'My 'ſon, if you deſire to make due progreſs in religion, 'ſtay at home in your cell; and there attend to God, 'and to yourſelf; and employ yourſelf in working 'with your hands: for coming abroad in this man'ner is not ſo good for you, as it would be to keep 'cloſe to your cell.' The brother hearing theſe words, was diſturbed, and offended with them; and ſhewed his diſpleaſure and reſentment in the change of his countenance. Which the holy abbot taking notice of, ſaid to him: 'A little while ago, you 'ſaid you was a poor ſinner: and accuſed yourſelf 'as one, that was not worthy to tread upon the 'earth: how then is it, that you are diſturbed, and 'ſtomach ſo much at a charitable admonition, that 'I have given you? If you have a true deſire to be 'humble indeed, you muſt learn to bear manfully, 'the things that others lay upon you; and not to be 'ſaying reproachful things of yourſelf; which you 'would not be willing another ſhould ſay, or believe 'of you.' The brother acknowledged his fault: and departed highly edified with the leſſons he received from the Saint.

XLIV.

The holy abbot Moſes was told that the judge of the province (who had heard of his eminent ſanctity)

was coming to viſit him, in his cell, in the deſart of Scete. To ſhun this viſit, the man of God leaving his cell, retired towards the Marſh. In his way he met the judge with his train: who not knowing him, inquired of him, where the cell of abbot Moſes was? Why do you inquire, ſaid he, after that worthleſs wretch? He is one that is void both of ſenſe and religion. The judge upon this, went to the church; and there told the clergy, that he came into the deſart, on purpoſe to viſit abbot Moſes, to be edified by his converſation: but that he had met with an old man, who had given him a very vile character. Pray, ſir, ſaid they, what ſort of a perſon was that, who gave ſo bad a character to that holy man? He was, ſaid the judge, a tall black old man, and his habit was very much worn. It was abbot Moſes himſelf, ſaid they, who ſpoke thus of himſelf; to avoid being viſited, and honoured by you. Which the judge hearing, departed very much edified with the Saint's humility. This was that Moſes, who had formerly been a captain of a band of robbers; who after his converſion, became not only an illuſtrious penitent, but ſo eminent in all virtue and ſanctity, as to be raiſed to the dignity of prieſt, and ſuperior of the holy ſolitaries of Scete; and after his death to be enrolled amongſt the Saints. See the Roman martyrology Auguſt 28.

XLV.

A brother had committed a fault, for which he was expelled the convent of abbot Elias: wherefore he went away to St. Antony, on his mountain; and after ſtaying a while with him, was ſent back by him to the convent. The brethren refuſed to receive him: wherefore he returned again to St. Antony. The Saint ſent him back again a ſecond time, with this meſſage; 'A ſhip was caſt away at ſea, and 'has loſt all its cargo; but with much ado the empty

'veſſel

'veſſel has been drawn to the ſhore: and would you, 'my brethren, after it has been thus brought to 'land, go and ſink it out right?' The brethren underſtanding the meaning of the Saint, preſently complied with it; and received the brother again into their congregation.

XLVI.

Another brother had fallen into ſome ſin; on account of which the prieſt bid him go out of the church. Whereupon the abbot Beſarion, who was preſent, roſe up, and went out with him; ſaying: I am a Sinner as well as he. This was the great Beſarion, of whoſe extraordinary ſanctity, and wonderful miracles, there is frequent mention in ancient monuments: whoſe name is recorded in the Roman martyrology amongſt the Saints, on the ſeventeenth of June.

XLVII.

A certain prieſt uſed to come, from time to time, to the cell of a ſervant of God, who lived in the wilderneſs, to celebrate maſs for him, and to adminiſter to him the bleſſed ſacrament. Now it happened, that this good hermite heard an ill report concerning the prieſt; and thereupon, the next time he came, he ſhut his door againſt him, and ſent him away. Which he had no ſooner done, but he heard a voice, ſaying: 'Men have taken away the judgment, that 'belongs to me, and have arrogated it to themſelves.' After which he was in a kind of extaſy or trance: in which he ſaw a well all of gold, full of moſt clear and excellent water; with a golden chain, and a golden bucket, to draw up the water in: he ſaw alſo a leper, drawing ſome of this water, and pouring it out of the bucket into a clean veſſel. Now he ſeemed to himſelf deſirous of drinking of it; only he had a repugnance to it, becauſe it was drawn by the leper. Whereupon he thought he heard a voice,

which ſaid to him: 'Why do'ſt thou not drink of 'this water? What harm has he done to it, who 'has drawn it: ſince he has done no more than filled 'the bucket, and then poured it out into the veſſel?' The hermite upon this, returned to himſelf: and having reflected on the meaning of the viſion, called back the prieſt, and deſired him to celebrate, and conſecrate for him, as he uſed to do.

XLVIII.

Some of the brethren went one day to St. Antony, to conſult him, whether they ought to have a regard to their dreams, when they found them followed by the event; or to deſpiſe them, as illuſions of the devil? Now they had an aſs with them, who happened to die in the way. As ſoon therefore as they came to the Saint, he was before hand with them; and aſked them; how their aſs came to die in the way? Why, ſaid they, father, how did you know of the death of the aſs? The devils, ſaid he, ſhewed it me in a dream. Upon this they told him the occaſion of their coming: for that they alſo had often dreams, which came to paſs; and for fear of being deluded, they deſired his opinion of theſe matters. The Saint gave them full ſatisfaction on this head; aſſuring them, by the example of the aſs, that theſe are but tricks of the enemy (to fill the mind with ſuperſtition) and are by no means to be taken notice of.

XLIX.

The holy abbot Agatho being aſked, which of the two was of greater importance, in a ſpiritual life, the mortification of the fleſh, by corporal labours and auſterities; or the keeping a guard upon the inward man? Anſwered that man was like a tree, in which corporal labours and auſterities were as the leaves; but the regularity of the interiour was the fruit. Wherefore, as our principal care muſt be about

about the fruit; becauſe it is written, that *every tree, which doth not bring forth good fruit, ſhall be cut up, and ſhall be caſt into the fire*; our chiefeſt ſolicitude muſt be about the interiour: yet we muſt not neglect the leaves, of corporal exercices; for they are both an ornament, and a covering, to protect the fruit.

L.

The ſame holy abbot uſed to ſay; that a man that is unmortified in regard to the paſſion of anger, though he were even to raiſe the dead to life, can not be pleaſing to God.

LI.

The holy abbot Pemen, ſaid; 'Evil cannot be 'caſt out by evil: wherefore if any one doth evil to 'you, do you good to him: that you may over-'come his evil by your good. He alſo ſaid: He 'that is quarrelſome, or is apt to murmur and 'complain, is no monk: he that renders evil for evil, 'is no monk: he that is paſſionate, is no monk.

LII.

The ſame Saint ſaid: Man's own will is as a wall of braſs, that ſtands between him and God. Wherefore he that renounces his own will, may ſay with the Pſalmiſt (Pſ. xvii. 30.) *Through my God I ſhall go over the wall:* and may arrive at the true juſtice of God; concerning which it is written in the following verſe: *as to my God, his way is undefiled.*

LIII.

Abbot Abraham, who had been a diſciple of St. Agatho, aſked the ſame St. Pemen: 'How comes 'it, father, that the devils are always aſſaulting me? 'The devils ſaid the Saint, don't impugn them, 'that do their own wills: for our own wills are 'devils, in our regard; becauſe they are always tempt-

'ing us to follow them. But ſuch as like Moſes and 'other Saints, have got the better of their own wills, 'them the devils impugn.'

LIV.

A certain brother complained to St. Pambo, that the wicked ſpirits would not let him do good to his neighbours. O, ſaid the Saint, don't ſpeak ſo; leſt you charge our Lord with not being true to his word: for he has told us Luke x. *Behold I have given you power to tread upon ſerpents and ſcorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy.* 'Tis then your want of a good will which you ought to accuſe, on this occaſion, and not the wicked ſpirits: for why don't you reſiſt them, and tread them under your feet?

LV.

One aſked abbot Siſois: father, what is the meaning that theſe paſſions will not depart from me? The abbot anſwered, becauſe you keep within you what belongs to them (by your irregular affections) but give up all that is theirs, (by mortifying all your diſorderly affections) and they ſhall have no hold on you, but ſhall depart from you.

LVI.

An ancient father being aſked, which was that *ſtrait and narrow way that leads to life*, which is ſpoken of Matt. vii? anſwered, that *the ſtrait and narrow way to life* is to do violence to ones own thoughts and inclinations; and to retrench for God's ſake ones own will: and that ſuch as do this may ſay with the apoſtles Matt. xix, *behold we have left all things, and have followed thee.*

LVII.

One of the brothers ſaid to abbot Siſois: 'I deſire 'to keep a guard upon my heart. And how can you

'you, ſaid the abbot, guard your heart, and keep 'it from danger, if you let the gate of the tongue 'be always open?' The ſame holy abbot uſed to ſay: 'That the great buſineſs of our pilgrimage is 'to keep a guard upon our mouths.'

LVIII.

Abbot Allois ſaid: 'Except a religious man have 'it in his heart, that there is no one in the world 'but God and himſelf, he ſhall not attain to true 'reſt.'

LIX.

One of the ancients ſaid: 'As no one preſumes 'to offer violence to a perſon that is at the ſide of 'the emperor: ſo neither can ſatan do any hurt 'to a ſoul, which ſticks cloſe to God: for it is 'written: *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh 'to you.* James iv. But becauſe the poor ſoul is of-'ten diſſipated, and forgets her God, the enemy 'has power to drag her away into ſhameful paſſions.'

LX.

One of the brothers told an ancient religious; that he was not ſenſible of any conflict, or war in his ſoul. 'O, ſaid the father, 'tis becauſe your ſoul is 'like an open place, where every one comes in, 'and goes out, that pleaſes; without any reſiſtance, 'on your part, or your taking any notice of them. 'But if you kept the door ſhut, by guarding 'againſt evil thoughts; you would quickly be ſen-'ſible of the war they would wage againſt you.'

LXI.

Another ancient ſaid, that ſatan had three harbingers, who uſually prepared the way for him; and ſerved to introduce ſin into the ſoul; viz. *oblivion* (or forgetfulneſs of God) *negligence*, and *concupiſcence.*

LXII.

LXII.

The patriarch Theophilus viſiting the religious of mount Nitria, aſked the ſuperior, what was the greateſt thing he had found out in that way of life? The father anſwered: *to find fault with myſelf, and to reprehend myſelf without ceaſing.* The prelate replied, *there is no ſafer way than that.*

LXIII.

Abbot Mathois ſaid: the more a man draws near to God, the more he ſees himſelf to be a ſinner: and thus when the prophet Iſaias ſaw the Lord (Chap. vi.) he immediately cried out: *Wo is me—becauſe I am a man of unclean lips—and I have ſeen with my eyes the King, the Lord of Hoſts.*

LXIV.

St. Arſenius related, as of another (though it was thought he himſelf was the perſon) that when one of the ancient religious was ſitting in his cell, he was called out by a voice, that ſaid to him: Come, and I will ſhew thee the works of men. The perſon that called him out, brought him firſt to a place, where he ſaw a negro cutting wood, and making a large truſs, which he tried to carry, and found it too heavy: whereupon inſtead of leſſening the truſs, he went and cut more wood, and ſtill added to the burthen: and ſo continued to do, without offering to take any thing away from the load, which even at the firſt was more than he could carry. He went on a little further, where he ſaw a man ſtanding by a lake, drawing water out of it, and pouring it into a veſſel full of holes; from whence all the water run away again into the lake. After this he was brought to another place; where he ſaw a building, like a temple, and two men a horſeback, marching in breaſt, and carrying together on their ſhoulders a long pole, with

with which they ſought to go into the temple: but as they would not be put out of their way, nor ſtoop, or turn the pole, ſo that one might go in before the other; they were both of them kept out: becauſe the length of the pole, in the manner they carried it, would not ſuffer them to enter within the gate of the temple. The perſon that ſhewed him theſe things, told him: that theſe two men repreſented ſuch as pretend to carry the yoke of religion, without renouncing their pride: for that ſuch as theſe, if they are not reclaimed, ſo as to walk humbly in the way of Chriſt, ſhall aſſuredly be kept out of God's eternal temple. He alſo told him, that the man, whom he ſaw cutting the wood, repreſented worldlings loaded with ſins; who inſtead of doing penance, or turning from their evil ways, were continually encreaſing their burthen, by adding ſin to ſin. And that the man who poured the water into the veſſel full of holes, repreſented ſuch as do many good works; but loſe the fruit of them, by mingling with them many that are evil. Wherefore every one ought to be watchful, with regard to the purity and perfection of his works, that he may not be found hereafter to have laboured in vain.

LXV.

The ſame St. Arſenius recounted, that there was in the wilderneſs a certain old-man, who was wonderful in his actions, but ſimple in faith: ſo that being ignorant, he was in an errour with regard to the holy euchariſt; ſaying that the bread, which we receive is not really the body of Chriſt, but only the figure of his body. Two of the ancient fathers, hearing that he had ſaid this, went to him, to beg of him to lay aſide that erroneous opinion; and to believe with them, and with the univerſal church, that the euchariſtick bread was indeed the body of Chriſt, and the chalice his blood, according to the truth,

truth, and not according to figure: becauſe Chriſt himſelf had aſſured us, ſaying *this is my body* &c. But as the old man did not appear ſatisfied, with what they ſaid on this ſubject: they agreed with him, that they ſhould all three earneſtly pray to God, during that week, with relation to this myſtery; that the truth might be made manifeſt to him. On the following ſunday, they all three placed themſelves together in the church; and at the celebrating the ſacred myſteries, there appeared to them three, as it were a little child lying upon the altar: and when the prieſt was going to divide the ſacramental bread, they ſaw an Angel dividing with a knife the body of the child, and receiving his blood in the chalice. And when they went up to communion, whilſt all the reſt received the bleſſed ſacrament, in its uſual form; the particle, that was given to the old-man, appeared to him bloody fleſh. At which when he was frightened, and cried out; 'I believe, O Lord, that the conſecrated bread is 'thy body, and the chalice is thy blood:' Immediately what he was going to receive returned to the ſhape of bread, according to the myſtery. Wherefore they all gave thanks to God, and bleſſed him for his wonderful goodneſs, in not ſuffering this his ſervant to loſe, by incredulity, the fruit of ſo many years labours.

Out

Out of the book of the virtues and miracles of the religious of their own times; publiſhed under the title of THE SPIRITUAL MEADOW, *by that holy man* John Moſchus, *ſirnamed* Eviratus, *and his intimate friend, and individual companion S.* Sophronius.

LXVI.

AN ancient religious dwelt in the monaſtery of the Towers (in Paleſtine) ſo eminent in virtue, that all the monks were deſirous of making him their abbot: but the old man begged of them to excuſe him, ſaying: 'Pardon me, reverend fathers, and 'ſuffer me to bewail my ſins: I am not worthy to 'be intruſted with the care of ſouls: that is only the 'buſineſs of ſuch men, as St. Antony, St. Pachomius, 'or St. Theodore; and not of ſuch wretches, as I am.' But as the brethren were ſtill urgent with him, to accept of the ſuperiority; and would not hear of any of his excuſes: he told them at length: 'Let me pray 'for three days, that I may know the will of God: 'and what he ſhall ordain for me to do, that will I do.' This he ſaid on the Friday, and on the Sunday in the morning, our Lord took him to himſelf.

LXVII.

Another religious man (of the ſame monaſtery) a great ſervant of God, died in the hoſpital of Jericho. Now when the brethren took his body from thence, and carried it to be buried in his own monaſtery: they perceived a bright ſtar over his head, which accompanied them all the way; and continued to be ſeen, till the body was enterred.

LXVIII.

Another monk of the ſame monaſtery, whoſe name was Myrogenes, by the auſterity of his life, had fallen into a dropſy: who, when the brethren came to viſit him, and comfort him under his ſuffe-

rings

rings; would ſay to them: 'Good fathers, pray for 'me, that the inward man may not fall into a dropſy: 'for as to this exterior infirmity, I make it my prayer 'to God, that it may continue with me.' The patriarch of Jeruſalem (Euſtochius) hearing of this holy man, deſired to be at the charges of furniſhing him with all neceſſaries: but the ſervant of God would not receive any thing of him: only begged, that he would pray for him, that he might be delivered from the everlaſting ſufferings of the world to come.

LXIX.

A brother deſired the abbot Olympius, prieſt of the monaſtery of St. Geraſimus, to give him a word of inſtruction. 'Fly, ſaid he, the converſation of 'hereticks: put a reſtraint upon thy tongue, and thy 'ſenſual appetite: and whereſoever thou art, ſay al-'ways to thyſelf: I am a ſtranger, and a pilgrim.'

LXX.

One of the fathers (of the laura of Cupatha) related to us, as what he had heard from the perſon himſelf to whom it happened: that when there was a war in Africa, between the Romans and the Moors; and the latter, in a certain engagement, had defeated the former, and ſlew many of them; one of the Roman ſoldiers in the flight, being cloſely purſued by a Barbarian, whoſe ſpear almoſt touched his back; prayed earneſtly to our Lord to deliver him; as he had delivered St. Thecla, out of the hands of her enemies: and promiſed, if he eſcaped with his life, he would preſently go into the deſart, and dedicate himſelf wholly to the love and ſervice of God. When behold looking back, he could ſee no more the Barbarian that purſued him; or any other enemy. Wherefore to fulfil his promiſe, he preſently repaired to the laura of Cupatha: and had already paſſed five and thirty years alone in a neighbouring cave, in devotion and penance.

LXXI.

LXXI.

When we (John and Sophronius) came to the monaſtery, which is called Philoxene, near the town of Dade in Cyprus, we found there a monk, a native of Melitene, whoſe name was Iſidore, who paſſed his whole time in weeping and mourning. The brethren often deſired him to deſiſt from his lamentations, and to give himſelf ſome reſt and eaſe, but he would not hear of it: alledging that he was the moſt enormous ſinner, that ever had been ſince the creation. His hiſtory we had from his own mouth, to the following effect. Whilſt he lived a married man in the world, both he and his wife were followers of the hereſy of Severus the Eutychian. But one day his wife, viſiting a catholic woman her neighbour, went with her to receive the catholic communion. The huſband being informed of her going, made what haſte he could after her, to prevent her receiving; but when he came, he found ſhe had juſt then communicated. Upon which in a great rage, he laid hold of her throat, and obliged her to bring up the conſecrated ſpecies; which he let fall into the dirt. When preſently he perceived the ſacred particle, which he had abuſed, ſhining with rays of light: and two days after, he ſaw a deformed black fellow, who ſaid to him: 'You and I are condemned 'to ſuffer the ſame puniſhment together.' And when he aſked him, who he was? He anſwered: 'I am the 'man, who ſtruck the Lord Jeſus, the Maker of all, 'on his cheek, in the time of his paſſion.' For this reaſon, ſaid Iſidore, I can never leave off weeping. And now you have heard my hiſtory, I hope you will be pleaſed to pray for me.

LXXII.

Two antient religious, travelling from Ægа in Cilicia to Tarſus, were obliged, in the heat of the day, to go into an inn: where they found three young men, with a harlot in their company. The two religious went,

went, and ſet down by themſelves: and one of them taking out the holy goſpel, began to read. The woman ſeeing this, left her company; and came, and ſat down by the old father, to hear him read the goſpel. The ſervant of God would have put her away; aſking, how ſhe could be ſo impudent, as to come and ſit by them? She replied: it is true, I am a wretched ſinner: but our God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, did not hinder a ſinful woman from coming to him: why therefore ſhould you caſt me off? The old father told her, that the woman, that came to our Saviour, renounced her wicked way of living, and was no longer a harlot. And I, ſaid ſhe, truſt in Jeſus Chriſt, that from this very hour, by his divine grace, I ſhall quit this ſinful way, and never more be guilty of the like ſins. She ſtood to her reſolution: and preſently leaving the world, and all ſhe poſſeſſed, ſhe went to the nunnery near Ægа, to which the two old men recommended her: where, ſays my author, 'I ſaw her, being now an old 'woman of great prudence; and learnt theſe things 'from her own mouth.' Now her name was Mary.

LXXIII.

There was a certain comedian in Tarſus of Cilicia, whoſe name was Babylas: who led a very wicked life, and kept two concubines; one of them was called Cometa, and the other Nicoſa. This man, one day hearing in the church thoſe words of the goſpel; *do penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand.* Matt. iii. was ſuddenly touched with an extraordinary compunction for his ſins; and determined upon the ſpot, to quit the world for good and all; and to dedicate the remainder of his days to devotion and penance. This reſolution, as ſoon as he came home, he imparted to the two women: telling them, that they might, if they pleaſed, divide his whole ſubſtance between them; but for his part, he was reſolved to provide for the ſalvation of his ſoul, by renouncing the world, from that very hour,

hour, and entring into religion. They were both of them greatly moved with his words: and told him with one voice, and with abundance of tears; that as they had been partners with him, in his ſinful ways; and had born him company, whilſt he was walking in the broad road of perdition: ſo were they alſo determined, to accompany him in his converſion to God, and to enter with him, upon the narrow way of eternal life: for why ſhould he think, in chooſing the better part for himſelf, to leave them in the lurch? Wherefore Babylas went, and ſhut himſelf up in one of the towers, belonging to the walls of the city: and the two women, after ſelling all their ſubſtance, and giving the price to the poor; made themſelves alſo a cell in the neighbourhood, where they dedicated themſelves to a recluſe and penitential life. This man, ſays my author, I myſelf ſaw, and was very much edified with his converſation. For he is a man exceedingly humble, mild and charitable.

LXXIV.

One of the fathers related to us, concerning St. Ephrem the patriarch of Antioch: that being very zealous and fervent in faith, he attempted the converſion of a famous monk, that lived upon a pillar, in the neighbourhood of Hierapolis; who had been ſeduced by the Eutychian hereticks, into a partnerſhip with them in their errours. This man ſtood out againſt the remonſtrances of the holy patriarch: and to ſhew how confident he was of the truth of his religion, he made a propoſal, that a great fire ſhould be kindled, and that the two, he and the patriarch, ſhould go into the fire together; and that they ſhould abide by the faith of him, who ſhould come out of the flames without hurt. St. Ephrem told him, he had propoſed a thing, that far exceeded the ſtrength of ſuch a poor ſinner, as he acknowledged himſelf to be: however, that confiding in the mercies of his Saviour; and hoping by this means

to bring about the ſalvation of an erring ſoul, he would agree to the propoſal. Immediately he ordered a great quantity of wood to be piled up; which he himſelf ſet on fire: and then he deſired the monk to come down from his pillar, that they might go hand in hand into the flames. But the heretick, who thought to have frightened the patriarch, with his propoſal; being diſmayed at his courage and reſolution, would not come down. The Saint then going up to the fire; and taking off his ſtole, prayed to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who was pleaſed to be incarnate, for the love of us; to make manifeſt on this occaſion his divine truth: and when he had ended his prayer, he caſt his ſtole into the midſt of the flames; where it remained for the ſpace of three hours, till all the wood was conſumed: and then it was taken out whole and entire, without having been ſo much as ſinged by the fire. The Stylite, aſtoniſhed at ſo evident a miracle, gave glory to God, and was converted upon the ſpot, to the catholic church; and was admitted by St. Ephrem to receive the holy communion at his own hands.

LXXV.

The ſame St. Ephrem, before he was patriarch, was count, or governour of all the Oriental diſtrict, of which Antioch was the capital; and was very illuſtrious for his almsdeeds and works of mercy. In his time, the city of Antioch was deſtroyed by an earthquake: which calamity furniſhed him with frequent occaſions of exerciſing his charity: and of employing a number of workmen, and labourers in repairing the publick buildings of that city. Now one of the fathers related to us, ſays my author, how on this occaſion a certain biſhop, privately withdrawing himſelf from his ſee, and putting on a poor labourer's frock, came to Antioch; and there hired out himſelf to ſerve the maſons. After ſome time the governour, in a viſion by night, ſaw this labourer lying aſleep, and over his

his head a pillar of fire, which reached even up to the ſkie. He was very much aſtoniſhed at the ſight; the more becauſe he perceived nothing in the whole garb, or perſon of the man, but what appeared mean and contemptible: however, as he continued for many nights to ſee the ſame thing; he ſent for the labourer, and aſked him, who, or what he was? He anſwered, he was a poor man, who endeavoured to gain his little livelihood by his work. The count not ſatisfied with this anſwer, told him plainly, he ſhould not go from him, till he had diſcovered to him the whole truth: and continued to conjure him, in ſo preſſing a manner, to give him a more particular account of himſelf; that at length, after requiring a ſolemn promiſe of ſecreſy, at leaſt till he ſhould be dead; He told him: 'I am a biſhop, 'but for God's ſake have reſigned up my biſhoprick; 'and I came hither, as to a ſtrange place, where no one 'might know me; and here I mortify my fleſh; employ 'myſelf in labouring; and by my work, I earn myſelf 'a little bread. Aſk not my name: for that I muſt, and 'will conceal. But take thou care to add to thy alms-'deeds, and thy good works, according to thy power: 'for before it is long, God ſhall promote thee to the 'apoſtolick ſee of this city; to feed the flock, which 'Chriſt our true God, has purchaſed with his own 'blood. Therefore, as I ſaid, be diligent in all the 'works of mercy; and always ſtand up zealouſly, and 'contend earneſtly for the orthodox faith: for with 'ſuch ſacrifices as theſe, God is beſt pleaſed.' St. Ephrem hearing all this, glorified our Lord, who has many hidden ſervants in the world; that are known to 'himſelf alone.'

LXXVI.

The abbat Stephen related to us, of a certain monk of the monaſtery of our holy father St. Sabas, whoſe name was Cyriacus: that one day, when his worldly friends were come to viſit him, and knocked at the

door of his cell; he prayed to God, that he might not be ſeen by them: then opening the door, he went out of his cell, into the deſart, without their perceiving him: and ſtaid abroad in the deſart, till he underſtood, they were gone away.

LXXVII.

The ſame abbat Stephen related to us, concerning father Julian the Stylite (illuſtrious for many miracles) that there was in his neighbourhood a lion; that did much miſchief: which the ſervant of God underſtanding, called one day his diſciple Pancratius; and bid him go, two miles to the ſouth: and there, ſaid he, thou ſhalt find the lion; and thou ſhalt ſay to him: 'Julian, the poor ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt, commands 'thee in the name of the ſame Jeſus Chriſt, the Son 'of God, who gives life to all things, to be gone from 'this country.' Pancratius went and found the lion; and ſpoke to him, as the Saint had ordered him: and the beaſt immediately obeyed, and was ſeen no more in that province.

LXXVIII.

Father Peter, a prieſt of the ſame monaſtery of St. Sabas, told us of another holy man, by name Thaleleus, of the province of Cilicia; how he had ſpent three-ſcore years in religion, in ſuch perpetual compunction and devotion; as never to ceaſe from weeping: and that he would be ever ſaying: 'this preſent 'time is allowed us by the divine mercy, for repen-'tance and penance: and what a terrible account ſhall 'we have to give, if we don't make good uſe of it?

LXXIX.

Three antient religious came to the cell of the holy abbat Stephen, prieſt of the monaſtery of the Æliotæ, to be edified by his converſation. Whilſt they were in his company, they ſpoke of different ſubjects of piety: but

but he kept ſilence. Father, ſaid they, we came to you, in hopes of learning ſomething of you: why do you ſay nothing to us? 'I beg your pardon, ſaid he; 'I really did not take notice of what you were ſpeak-'ing of. But to tell you the truth; I have nothing 'elſe night and day before my eyes, but our Lord Je-'ſus Chriſt crucified.' With this anſwer, they departed, not a little edified.

LXXX.

Abbot John, ſirnamed Molybius, recounted to us, concerning this ſame holy prieſt Stephen: that in his laſt illneſs the phyſicians obliged him to eat meat. Now a brother of his, a ſecular, but a very virtuous man, finding him eating, was ſhocked, and very much grieved, that he, who had lived ſo many years in ſuch great abſtinence and mortification, ſhould now in the latter end of his life, fall to the eating of fleſh-meat. Whilſt he had this in his mind, he fell into an extaſy; and ſaw in ſpirit one ſtanding by him, and reprehending him, for taking ſcandal, without cauſe, at what his brother did, through neceſſity, and by obedience. 'But, ſaid he, if you deſire to know the merit and 'glory of your brother; turn and ſee him.' Upon which, turning about, he ſaw his brother, faſtened to the croſs with our Lord: 'See, ſaid the perſon, that appeared to him, 'in what glory your brother is. And 'learn to glorify him, who glorifies in this manner 'them that love him in truth.'

LXXXI.

Abbot Theodoſius related of himſelf, that in his younger days, before he embraced a ſolitary life, he ſaw one day, in an extaſy, a perſon ſhining brighter than the ſun, who took him by the hand, and ſaid: come along with me; for thou muſt wreſtle, and fight, for a crown. With that he led him into a theatre, im-

menſely wide; and full of people (of whom one part was clothed in white, the other in black) and placed him in the midſt of the theater. And here he ſaw, ſtanding before him, a filthy negro, of a gigantick ſize, and ſtrength; with whom he was told he was to wreſtle. He would have excuſed himſelf; alledging, that no ſtrength upon earth, could be able to ſtand againſt ſuch a monſter: but the perſon that brought him thither, told him, he muſt needs wreſtle with him. 'Go up 'then, ſaid he, chearfully and courageouſly; and at-'tack him: and I will ſtand by thee, and aſſiſt thee; 'and give thee the crown of victory.' Upon this encouragement, Theodoſius ſeemed to himſelf to have entered the liſts; and with the help of his friend, to have overthrown his adverſary; and received the crown; to the great joy and triumph of all them that were clothed in white; who all gave praiſe and glory to him, who had given his ſervant the victory: whilſt the others in black were all confounded, and put to flight. This ſame abbot Theodoſius, as we learnt from his diſciple, the abbot Cyriacus, ſpent five and thirty years in ſolitude, eating but once in two days, and obſerving a perpetual ſilence. Of this I was for ſome time an eye-witneſs, ſays John Moſchus, for I lived ten years in the ſame monaſtery.

LXXXII.

When Sophronius and I (John Moſchus) were at Alexandria, we went to viſit abbat Palladius, a true ſervant of God, ſuperior of the monaſtery in Lithoſomenon; and we aſked of him a word of edification. 'My children, ſaid he, our time here is very ſhort; 'let us then fight during this ſhort time: let us labour 'in earneſt, for the immortal goods of a happy eterni-'ty. O look upon the martyrs: look upon thoſe 'champions of heaven; and ſee how bravely they have 'fought and conquered——what cruel torments they 'have ſuſtained; with what ardour of faith, they have 'gone through all the ſufferings of the ſhort moment

'of

'of this preſent time; and purchaſed thereby an eter-
'nal and immenſe weight of glory. To labour there-
'fore, to ſuffer, and to overcome, with the help of
'our Lord, the tribulations of this life, is the way to
'prove ourſelves true lovers of God. In the mean
'time, he himſelf will be with us; and will fight and
'conquer in us, and for us: he will alleviate, by his
'divine grace, all our labours and ſufferings. Patience
'and penitence muſt then be our exercices, in this
'ſhort time, that is allowed us here; that ſo we may
'arrive at the honour and dignity, of being the eter-
'nal temples of God.' He added, that we ſhould al-
ways ſet before our eyes him, who *had not*, during his
mortal life, *where to lay his head*: and that we ſhould re-
member, that the ſuffering of *tribulation*, according to St.
Paul, Rom. v. *worketh patience*; *and patience trial*;
and trial hope; *and hope confoundeth not* &c. ſo that
this is indeed the true way to diſpoſe our ſouls, for the
kingdom of heaven. Wherefore, *my children*, ſaid he,
*let us not love the world, nor the things that are in the
world.* 1 John ii. but let us keep a conſtant guard
upon our thoughts, by recollection of ſpirit; which is
the medicine of ſalvation.

LXXXIII.

We aſked this holy man, what had been the firſt oc-
caſion of his call to a monaſtick life? Upon which he
related to us the following hiſtory: 'There was, ſaid
'he, in my country (Theſſalonica in Macedonia) an
'ancient religious man, named David, a native of
'Meſopotamia: who lived for four-ſcore years ſhut up
'in a little cell by himſelf, without the walls of the
'city (at the diſtance of about three furlongs) in great
'ſanctity and abſtinence. Now it happened, by rea-
'ſon of the inroads of the barbarians, that ſoldiers
'were placed, all round the walls of the city, to guard
'it in the night, for fear of the enemy. Theſe guards
'obſerved one night flames of fire, coming out of the
'windows of the cell of the ſervant of God: from

glorified our Lord, who had in this miraculous manner, preſerved the life, both of the mother and the child; who were thus recommended to the care of his Virgin mother.

LXXXVII.

The ſame Palladius related alſo to us another remarkable hiſtory, which he learnt from a maſter of a ſhip, who was himſelf witneſs to it. A widow, named Mary, had made away with two of her own children, in order to recommend herſelf to a man, with whom ſhe was in love; but who refuſed to marry her, on account of her children. But when ſhe had ſecretly perpetrated this crime; and had ſignified to the man, that her children were now removed out of the way: he conceived ſo great a horrour for her, that he declared, with a ſolemn oath, he would never marry her, on any account. Being thus diſappointed, and apprehending leſt her guilt ſhould be divulged, and ſhe ſhould fall into the hands of juſtice, and be put to death: to withdraw herſelf to a greater diſtance from the danger; ſhe went on board the veſſel belonging to the captain, from whom the holy abbat had his informations. But although ſhe thus fled from the juſtice of man; ſhe could not eſcape the juſtice of God. For when they had ſet ſail, and were advanced into the deep; all on a ſudden the ſhip ſtood ſtill: ſo that for many days they could neither go forward, nor backward; though they ſaw other ſhips, not far off them, holding divers courſes, and going on with proſperous gales. All were in the utmoſt conſternation, to ſee themſelves ſtand thus immoveable, in the middle of the ſea (for there were many paſſengers on board): particularly the maſter of the ſhip, whoſe all was at ſtake, was in the greateſt concern; and with much inſtance begged of God, to ſend them a deliverance. At length in his prayer

prayer, he heard a voice, that ſaid: 'Put Mary 'out of the veſſel: and you ſhall have a good 'voyage.' As he did not comprehend, what the meaning of this ſhould be; nor knew who this Mary was; and therefore was dubious what was to be done: the voice ſaid to him again: 'Put Mary, I 'ſay, out of your ſhip, and all ſhall go well with 'you.' With this he called out, *Mary, Mary*: and upon her anſwering to her name, he deſired to ſpeak to her apart: and told her he was afraid, that on account of his ſins, they were all going to periſh. O no, ſir, ſaid ſhe, fetching a deep ſigh, 'tis rather on account of my ſins: for there is no crime, that I have not been guilty of: and with that ſhe told him the hiſtory of the murder of the children. He then propoſed to her; as it were in order to know, whether it was for his ſins, or for her ſins, that the ſhip was ſtopped; that the boat ſhould be let down; and that he ſhould firſt go out of the ſhip into the boat; to ſee whether the ſhip would then advance: and if not, then he ſhould return into the ſhip; and ſhe ſhould go down into the boat. He went down firſt, according to his propoſal, into the boat; but both ſhip and boat remained immoveable. But as ſoon as he was come back; and ſhe was gone down out of the ſhip; the boat immediately turned round five times, and then went down with her to the bottom, and was ſeen no more. And preſently the ſhip ſprung forward; and continued to advance, with ſuch unuſual ſpeed, as to make in three days and a half, a voyage, which otherwiſe muſt have coſt them fifteen days.

LXXXVIII.

As another inſtance of the juſtice of God, often overtaking the wicked, even on this ſide of eternity; my author relates how he and Sophronius, ſhelter-ing themſelves, one day at noon, from the violence of

of the heat of the ſun, under the covert of a place called the *Tetrapylon* (where the Alexandrians ſay, the bones of the prophet Jeremias were depoſited) found there three blind men ſitting; and heard them relating to one another, how they became blind. The firſt ſaid, that being a ſailor he was ſtruck blind (by lightening) at ſea. The ſecond, that he had loſt his eyes, by the fire, working in a glaſs-houſe. But the third made a ſincere confeſſion: that being an idle young fellow, and hating to work, he had begun to take to pilfering. And that ſeeing one day a man carried to be buried, in rich clothes; and depoſited in a monument, behind St. John's church; he had watched his opportunity; and going into the monument, had ſtripped the corps of the clothes: but that when he was about to take away the linnen alſo, which was next to the body; the dead corps (by ſome ſupernatural power) ſat up: and fixing its nails in his eyes, pluckt them out. 'And thus, ſaid he, wretched I, in 'great anguiſh and deſolation, quitting all that I 'had taken, fled out of the monument: and this 'is the true hiſtory of my blindneſs.' This account, which theſe two ſervants of God heard from the mouth of the blindman himſelf, they committed to writing, for a warning to evil doers, not to think, even in their moſt private ſins, to eſcape the notice of the juſtice of God.

LXXXIX.

No leſs remarkable in this kind, is what theſe ſame holy men learnt from abbat John, ſuperior of a monaſtery near Antioch: with relation to a young man, who had in like manner preſumed to ſtrip the dead corps, of a maiden gentlewoman; and when he would have gone out of the monument, laden with the ſpoils, was held faſt by the dead; and not ſuffered to ſtir, till he had reſtored all

all he had taken; and had made a ſolemn promiſe, to renounce his wicked courſe of life, and to enter forthwith into religion. He was as good as his word, and went immediately to this ſame abbat John; and with the greateſt marks of compunction, begged of him, for the love of God, to receive him into his monaſtery. And when the abbat enquired of him the cauſe of that exceſſive grief, and anguiſh, which he ſaw in him: he related to him the whole matter of fact as above. The abbat comforted him, and received him to the monaſtick habit; and appointed him for his cell a cavern in the mountain, where at the very time, that my authors heard from him this hiſtory (which happened but a little while before) the young man was actually doing penance for his ſins, and ſerving our Lord with great fervour and piety.

XC.

Sophronius and John Moſchus viſited alſo one day a holy anchoret, who had his cell at the diſtance of eighteen miles from Alexandria; and they begged of him to give them ſome leſſons, for their inſtruction and edification. 'My children, ſaid he, you do well 'in renouncing the world, in order to ſecure your 'ſouls. Go then, and remain in your cells; be 'ſober and watch; keep yourſelves quiet and 'ſilent, and pray without ceaſing: and I truſt in my 'God, that he will ſend you there the true ſcience of 'the Saints, to enlighten your ſouls. He ſaid again, 'my children, if you deſire to be ſafe, flee from 'men: and be not of the number of thoſe that run 'gadding about, from houſe to houſe, from place 'to place, for the ſake of worldly intereſt, or empty 'glory; and thus fill their ſouls with nothing but 'vanity. Let us flee, my children, let us flee: for 'the time is near at hand. Again he ſaid: Alas, 'alas! how much ſhall we lament another day; how 'bit-

'bitterly ſhall we repent; for not having been hearty 'penitents now? Our miſery is ſo great; that when 'we are praiſed, we are puffed up with it; and when 'we are diſpraiſed, we cannot brook it: the one 'ſuggeſts to us pride and vain glory; the other de-'preſſes us poor wretches with ſadneſs, and anguiſh. 'Now there can no good be found, where either 'ſadneſs or vain glory reſides. He ſaid again; the 'devils make it their buſineſs, when they have drawn 'the ſoul into ſin, to ſtrive to caſt her headlong 'into dejection and deſpair, that ſo they may com-'pleat her ruin. They are always plotting againſt 'the poor ſoul; and ſaying, *when ſhall ſhe die, and 'her name periſh?* But let the ſoul, that is ſober, 'reply to them, with confidence in her God. *I ſhall 'not die, but live, and ſhall declare the works of the 'Lord.* And if they ſhould ſay to her again: *Get 'thee away from hence to the mountain like a ſparrow:* 'let her reply, behold *my God, and my Saviour, he is 'my protector, I will not go hence.* He alſo ſaid: keep 'a guard always at the gate of your hearts: and let 'no ſtranger in. But diligently enquire, *Art thou one 'of ours, or of our adverſaries?* Joſ. v.'

XCI.

'We went alſo to abbot John of Petra, and de-'ſired of him a word of inſtruction. This good 'father recommended particularly to us poverty of 'ſpirit, (in ſuch manner as to love to be bare of all 'earthly things) and continence or mortification. 'And to this purpoſe, he related to us, that when 'he was a young man and abode in the deſart of 'Scete, one of the religious of that place being ill 'had occaſion for a ſmall quantity of vinegar: but 'that their poverty and abſtinence was ſo great, that 'not one drop could be found, in all the four mona-'ſteries: although there were there at that time no 'fewer than three thouſand five hundred fathers.'

XCII.

XCII.

John the Cilician abbot of Raythu uſed to inculcate to his brethren the following leſſons. 'My children, 'as we have fled away from the world, by entring 'into religion; ſo let us alſo flee away from the 'fleſh, and all its paſſions and concupiſcences. Let us 'walk in the ſteps of our fathers, and holy found-'ers, who firſt inhabited this place; and led ſuch 'ſtrict and mortified lives; with ſo much ſilence 'and recollection. O, my children, let us not be ſo 'unhappy, as to defile by our ſins, this place, which 'our fathers have taken ſo much pains to cleanſe, 'and to purify from the evil ſpirits, and their works 'of darkneſs.' He alſo told them for their encouragement; that when he firſt came thither, he found aged monks, who had ſpent ſeventy years in that place; living all that time upon nothing elſe but herbs and dates: and that for his own part, he had now been ſeventy ſix years there; and had gone through many a conflict, and a great variety of moleſtations, and temptations from the ſpirits of darkneſs. This was that abbot of Raithu, to whom St. John Climacus dedicated his *ladder of paradiſe*.

XCIII.

We went alſo to viſit abbot John the Perſian: and he recounted to us concerning that great man, Gregory the moſt bleſſed biſhop of Rome, the following paſſage. 'When, ſaid he, I was at Rome; (to which 'city I went to venerate the ſepulchers of the holy 'Apoſtles Peter and Paul) and was one day ſtand-'ing in the middle of the city; they told me the 'pope was about to paſs that way. Upon which I 'thought I would ſtay, and caſt myſelf at his feet, to 'ſhew reverence to him. Now when he came near, 'and ſaw me ready to pay him that veneration; I 'call God to witneſs, that he firſt proſtrated him-

'ſelf

'ſelf upon the ground before me, and would not 'riſe up again, till he ſaw me get up: then ſaluting 'me, with a wonderful humility, he put three 'pieces of money into my hand; and gave orders 'to his people that I ſhould be ſupplied with all 'neceſſaries. All which gave me occaſion to glorify 'God: for that exceeding great humility, mercy, 'and unbounded charity, which he had beſtowed 'upon this his ſervant.

XCIV.

Abbot Andrew, ſuperior of a monaſtery near Alexandria, related to us: that when in his youth, he was going from Alexandria into Paleſtine, with nine others in his company; one of the number, who was a Jew, named Theodore, was taken ill, with a violent fever, in the deſart, through which they were obliged to paſs. The reſt of the company pitying his caſe, afforded him what comfort they could, and led him forward, in hopes of being able to reach ſome town or village, where he might be refreſhed: but the vehement heat of the ſun, joined with the fatigue of the journey, and the exceſſive thirſt he endured, would not ſuffer him to go on any farther; and brought him to that extremity of weakneſs and faintneſs, that there were now no hopes left of his life; ſo that his companions fearing, leſt the ſame ſhould be their own caſe, if they did not make the beſt of their way out of that burning deſart, thought of leaving him, ſince they could no longer be of any ſervice to him. He ſeeing them about to go away from him, conjured them for Chriſt's ſake, not to let him die without baptiſm: ſince he vehemently deſired to die a Chriſtian. They anſwered him, that there was no one amongſt them qualified to adminiſter the ſacrament of baptiſm: and that this ſacrament could not by any means be adminiſtred without water: which could not poſſibly be had in thoſe

thoſe burning ſands. But as he ſtill perſiſted, begging and praying with many tears, that they would not be ſo cruel, as to let him die, without making him a Chriſtian; one of them (inſpired, as we may believe, from heaven) deſired the reſt to lift him up, and to hold him; for he was not able to ſtand by himſelf: then filling both his hands with ſand, he poured it upon his head, at three different effuſions, repeating at the ſame time the form of words, uſed by the church in the adminiſtration of baptiſm, to which all the company anſwered, Amen. When behold: 'As God is my witneſs, brethren, ſaid the 'abbot to us, the man (that was dying before) was 'ſo ſuddenly, and perfectly healed, and ſtrengthened 'by Chriſt our Lord, that there remained in him 'not the leaſt ſign of illneſs, or weakneſs; or of 'having ſuffered any thing whatſoever. On the 'contrary, he appeared now ſound and ſtrong, 'and with a florid countenance; and performed 'what remained of the journey, through the deſart, 'with a wonderful alacrity, ſo as to be always the 'foremoſt of the company.' The abbot alſo related, how that as ſoon as they came into Paleſtine, to the city of Aſcalon; they carried the convert to the holy biſhop Dionyſius; recounting to him all that had happened; and his miraculous cure, upon his being baptized with the ſand. The good prelate glorified our Lord, for his goodneſs and mercy, ſhewn on this occaſion: but after conſulting with his clergy, concluded, that as neither ſcripture nor tradition allow of the adminiſtring of baptiſm, otherwiſe than in water, the man ought to be baptized in water, as the church preſcribes. And for greater ſolemnity, he ſent him away to the banks of the Jordan, that he might be baptized there, where our Lord himſelf was baptized.

XCV.

When we were in the iſle of Samos, the lady Mary, that venerable and charitable matron, mother of the illuſtrious courtier Paul, related to us: that when ſhe lived in the city of Niſibis in Meſopotamia, there was in that city a very good Chriſtian woman, who was married to a pagan huſband, but a well meaning ſimple man. They were but low in their circumſtances: only they had by them a ſmall ſum, of about fifty pieces of ſilver; which the man had a mind to put out to uſe. The good woman told him, the beſt way he could put his money out, was to give it to Jeſus Chriſt, the God of the Chriſtians: for that no one gave ſuch good intereſt for money as he did; and that he would even return the principal double. He aſked her, where he might find this God of the Chriſtians; that he might put out his money into ſuch good hands? She led him to the church; and ſhewed him there in the porch, a number of poor people; and told him, that what was given to the poor, the God of the Chriſtians accepted of, as given to himſelf; and would repay it with intereſt. Upon this, without more ado, he freely, and chearfully diſtributed the whole ſum amongſt the poor. About three months after, finding himſelf in ſome ſtraits, he told his wife, that the God of the Chriſtians did not ſeem to take any notice of the debt; and that he was now in want. She, with great faith, bid him go to the place, where he had lent him the money; and no doubt but he ſhould be paid. He went to the church; where he ſaw the poor, to whom he had given the money; but met with no one, that offered to reimburſe what he had laid out upon them, or to pay him any intereſt. At length, whilſt he was thinking with himſelf what he was to

do

do, or to whom he was to addreſs himſelf; he ſaw lying at his feet one piece of ſilver; which he took up, and carried home. His wife told him, the God of the Chriſtians (who without being ſeen by us, diſpoſes of all things, and provides for all the world) had ſent him that piece of money: and ſhe deſired him to go, and buy with it what they wanted for that day; and that he would not fail to provide for them alſo for the time to come. He went to market with the money, and bought ſome bread, and wine, and a fiſh for their dinner, which he gave to his wife to dreſs. In opening the fiſh, ſhe found in its entrails a precious ſtone of admirable beauty; which ſhe ſhewed to her huſband: and he, without knowing the value of it, carried it to a jeweller to ſell. The jeweller bid him, at firſt ſight, five pieces of ſilver for it. What, ſaid he, ſo much as that? Suppoſing the man was not ſerious. The jeweller then bid him ten pieces: but he ſtill thinking he was in jeſt (for he had no notion of the value of the ſtone) ſtood ſilent. But when he offered him twenty, and then thirty, and afterwards forty, and at length roſe to fifty pieces of ſilver; he began to be convinced the jewel was worth a great deal more; and ſtood upon a higher price. The jeweller riſing gradually came at laſt to offer him three hundred pieces of ſilver: which he agreed to take; and carried the money home to his wife. She took occaſion from thence to repreſent to him, how well he had been dealt with by the God of the Chriſtians; and how good, and how bountiful he was, who for the fifty pieces of ſilver he had lent to him, three months before, had returned him in ſo ſhort a time three hundred. This wonderful event was immediately followed by the converſion of the man: who ceaſed not afterwards to glorify God, for his infinite goodneſs to him: and to hold himſelf highly endebted to the wiſdom and

piety of his religious wife; who had been the happy inſtrument, by which he was brought to the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and of his ſaving truths.

XCVI.

When we were at Alexandria, in the days of the holy patriarch Eulogius (cotemporary with St. Gregory the great, and his intimate friend) we there met with Leontius of Apamea, a moſt religious and faithful man; who had lived for many years at Cyrene; and was come to be conſecrated biſhop of that ſee. This prelate related to us the following hiſtory. In the days of the patriarch Theophilus, a famous philoſopher called Syneſius was made biſhop of Cyrene; who had an intimate friend, a philoſopher alſo, whoſe name was Evagrius. This man was a pagan, and very averſe from the Chriſtian religion; to which the holy prelate would gladly have brought him over: particularly he objected againſt the articles of the reſurrection of the dead, and of the eternal rewards and puniſhments of the world to come. However Syneſius was not diſcouraged with this reſiſtance he met with; and did not leave off uſing all the means in his power, for the converſion of his old friend: till the grace of God bleſſing his endeavours, Evagrius was at length determined to embrace the Chriſtian faith; and was baptized with his whole family. Some time after he brought a bag of three hundred pieces of gold to the biſhop; and put it in his hands, for the uſe of the poor: deſiring he would be pleaſed to give him a note under his own hand, that Chriſt would repay him in the world to come: which Syneſius readily complied with. Evagrius ſome years after this fell ill of the diſtemper of which he died: and being near his end, he gave the biſhop's note of hand to his ſons; deſiring it might be buried with him.

His

His ſons did as he deſired; and put the note in the hand of their father's corps, and buried him with it. Three nights after Evagrius appeared to Syneſius in his ſleep; and bid him go to the monument where his body lay buried; and to receive back his note: for that the whole had been repaid to him: and as a teſtimony of it, he ſhould find an acquittance, written by his (Evagrius's) own hand. The biſhop next morning ſent for the young men, and aſked them if they had not buried ſome paper with their father? They acknowledged they had, at his requeſt: but that no one knew any thing of it. Then taking them along with him, together with his clergy, and the principal men of the city, he ordered the tomb to be opened in their preſence; where they found the philoſopher lying, with the paper in his hand: which when they had taken out of his hand, and had opened it; they ſaw, under the note, an acquittance; which appeared to be newly written, in Evagrius's own hand; by which he acknowledged that he had received the contents, and was fully ſatisfied for the whole ſum, which he had given by the hands of Syneſius, to Jeſus Chriſt, our God and Saviour. This note and acquittance, as the ſame Leontius aſſured us, is kept to this day, in the treaſury of the church of Cyrene; and is always, in a ſpecial manner, recommended to the care of the treaſurer of that cathedral.

XCVII.

One of the fathers related to us; that when he was at Conſtantinople, upon ſome neceſſary buſineſs, and was ſitting one day in the church; there came up to him a gentleman of condition; and ſaluting him, deſired to ſit down by him, and to hear from him ſome leſſons for the good of his ſoul. The father

told him, that the making a good uſe of the things of the earth would be a great means to bring him to heavenly goods. 'Father, ſaid he, you 'are in the right: and that man is happy indeed, 'who places all his hopes in God, and commits 'himſelf wholly to God. I had a father, a gentle-'man of note, and very rich, but a great alms-'giver, who diſtributed large ſums of money to the 'poor. He aſked me one day, after giving me an 'account of all he was worth, whether I choſe that 'he ſhould keep all that, and leave it to me, at 'his death; or that he ſhould diſpoſe of it, in the 'manner he had begun, by giving it to Chriſt, by 'the hands of the poor, and to leave me Chriſt, for 'my guardian and truſtee. I told him, I was very 'well ſatisfied with his diſpoſing of his worldly 'ſubſtance in charity; and that I choſe Chriſt be-'fore all other goods: for all theſe paſs away; they 'are with us to day, and they are gone to-morrow: 'but Chriſt remains forever. After this, my father 'was ſo profuſe in his alms; that when he came to 'die, he left me very poor: but not without a great 'confidence in Chriſt, to whoſe care he had com-'mitted me. Now there was at this time another 'gentleman of diſtinction in the city, exceeding rich; 'and who was married to a lady, a very good Chriſ-'tian, and one that greatly feared our Lord. They 'had one only daugther, to inherit all their ſub-'ſtance: and as ſhe was now marriageable; the wife 'propoſed to her huſband, that inſtead of giving her 'in marriage to ſome rich nobleman; who if he 'were not a ſervant of God, might make her mife-'rable; they ſhould rather look out for ſome ver-'tuous humble man, that feared God; and would 'both love and cheriſh her, and go hand in hand with 'her to heaven: for riches they wanted none for her, 'having a large fortune to give her: and therefore

'virtue

'virtue and happineſs was all they had to ſeek for. The 'huſband approved of her way of thinking; and bid 'her go to church, and recommend the matter 'earneſtly to God; and after praying, with all the 'fervour ſhe was able, to addreſs herſelf to the firſt 'perſon, whom God ſhould ſend into the church, as 'to the man deſigned by providence, to be the 'huſband of their daughter. She went, and prayed; 'and after ſhe had finiſhed her prayers, ſhe ſat down 'in the church: and as providence had ordered it, 'I was the firſt that came in. She preſently ſent her 'ſervant to call me to her; and inquired of me, 'who, or whence I was? I told her, I was of this 'city, and was ſon of ſuch a one. What, ſaid ſhe, 'of that gentleman, who gave away all his eſtate in 'alms? Yes, ſaid I, of the ſame. Have you a 'wife, ſaid ſhe? I anſwered, no: and I told her 'what my father had ſaid to me; and how he had 'given me Chriſt for my guardian and truſtee. Upon 'which ſhe glorified God: and told me that my good 'guardian had provided me, both with a wife, and 'a plentiful eſtate; and wiſhed me to uſe them both, 'with the fear of God. Thus I received both her 'daughter, and all her worldly ſubſtance: and I 'pray God that I may walk, to the end of my life, 'in the footſteps of my father.

XCVIII.

Another of the fathers related to us; concerning a certain lady of the firſt quality; who after viſiting the holy places, and performing her devotions in Jeruſalem; went down to Ceſarea, to fix her abode in that city. Here ſhe deſired of the biſhop, to place ſome religious woman with her, who might teach her humility, and the fear of God. The biſhop, for this purpoſe, made choice of a very virtuous humble maid;

whom he recommended to her. After some time he asked her, how she liked the virgin, whom he had placed with her? She is good, said she, but is of no great service to my soul: for she is very humble, and lets me do all that I please, and never contradicts me. Upon this the bishop sent a woman to her, that was of a more rough and untowardly disposition; and who failed not to give the good lady frequent occasions of exercising her patience, as well as her humility and charity, in bearing with her uneasy temper, her unruly tongue, and her perpetual contradictions, and reproaches. The bishop after some time again desired to know, how she liked this other woman? She answered, that she had reason to be very well contented with her; because she was indeed of great service to her soul, by teaching her patience, meekness and humility: which are best learnt, in the school of reproaches and contradictions.

XCIX.

One of the fathers related also to us; that there were two neighbouring bishops, who had some contest between them, upon affairs relating to their respective dioceses; which was like to turn out very much to the prejudice of the weaker of the two: because his antagonist was a politick man, and one that had great power and interest. Wherefore being sensible of the danger, he assembled one day all his clergy, and told them, he had found out an expedient, by means of which, through the grace of Christ, he made no doubt but they should gain their cause, and overcome their adversary. They could not comprehend, how this could be; considering the power, and the craft of the man, whom they had to deal with. Well, said he, stay a little, and you shall see the goodness of God. On such a day, they celebrate in that diocese, with

with great ſolemnity, the feſtival of the holy martyrs; but that day therefore you ſhall go thither, along with me; and what you ſhall ſee me do; do all of you the ſame; and we ſhall carry our cauſe. On the day appointed, they all followed him to the neighbouring city; not being able to conceive, by what means he intended to overcome his adverſary. When they came to the place, they found the whole people aſſembled, with their biſhop, and his clergy. When without any more adoe, their prelate went up, they all following him, and proſtrated himſelf, with them all, at the feet of the other biſhop: ſaying, *Forgive us, my good lord, we are all of us your ſervants.* The other, ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, at ſo great humility; and at the ſame time touched with compunction, God changing his heart, fell down alſo upon his face, and taking hold of the feet of his fellow biſhop, cried out; *It is you that are both my lord, and my father:* and ſo from that moment their conteſtation was at an end: and they ever after lived in perfect mutual concord and charity. Thus the good prelate, by his humility, gained both his cauſe, and the heart of his adverſary; and told his clergy upon the occaſion, that this was the true way to overcome their enemies.

C.

A certain brother, who was aſſaulted with ſadneſs, applied to one of the fathers; aſking what he ſhould do; becauſe his thoughts were continually ſuggeſting to him, that he was but loſing his time in religion, and could never be ſaved? 'Brother, ſaid the father, 'whatever you do, never think of going back to the 'world, which you have renounced. If we cannot 'arrive at the land of promiſe; it is better for us to 'die in the wilderneſs, than to return into Egypt.'

CI.

CI.

Gregory the governor of the province of Africa, a good Chriſtian, and a great lover of the poor, and of the religious, related to us the following hiſtory: which happened in our times, in his country; that is, in the diſtrict of Apamea in Syria. There is in that region, a place called Gonagus, forty miles diſtant from the city of Apamea: in the neighbourhood of which, ſome country-boys, in the way of play, took upon them to mimick the ſacrifice of the maſs, and the holy communion; according to what they had ſeen done by the prieſts in the church. For this purpoſe, they appointed one of their number to officiate as prieſt, and two others to aſſiſt as deacon and ſubdeacon: and making a large ſtone, in the middle of the field, ſerve for an altar, they placed ſome bread, and ſome wine, in an earthen cup, upon it. Then he that perſonated the prieſt, having his two miniſters on each hand of him; recited the words of the ſacred oblation, and conſecration (which he had learnt by heart, by being near the altar; becauſe in ſome places the prieſts recited them aloud) and proceeded in the maſs, till towards the end of the canon. But before they came to the breaking of the bread, and the communion; a fire came down from heaven, which conſumed in an inſtant, both all they had ſet upon their altar, and the ſtone itſelf; ſo as to leave no remains, or footſteps of them. Upon this, they all of them fell to the ground, half dead with the fright; and for ſome time could neither recover ſpeech, nor motion. In this condition they were found by their friends, and carried home: to whom, as ſoon as they were able, they recounted all that had happened: and the marks of the fire, in the place where it fell, plainly demonſtrated the truth of what they recounted. The biſhop of Apamea, hearing of this extraordinary event, came out with all his clergy, and took cognizance of the whole matter, upon

upon the ſpot; by examining the boys, and viewing the footſteps of the fire: and in the concluſion, cauſed a monaſtery to be built in that field; and a church erected there: the altar of which he fixed in the place, where the fire had fallen. And as to the boys, he placed them all in religious houſes: and one of them was afterwards a monk, in the monaſtery, which he had built: where the ſame lord Gregory, who related to us this wonderful hiſtory, ſaw him, and knew him.

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